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COLLECTION
OF
DISCOURSES,
DISSERTATIONS,
AND
SERMONS.

In Two VOLUMES.

By the Late Reverend
JOHN JOHNSON, A. M. *K*
Vicar of CRANBROOK in KENT.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

Printed by EDW. CAVE in St. John's Lane,
for Mrs. MARY JOHNSON in the Year

M. DCC. XXVIII.

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CONTENTS

VOL. I.

- I. **T**HE Primitive Communicant, in
*Three Discourses on the Sacrament
of the Eucharist; in which the Sacrament
of Christ and of the Church are fully ex-
plain'd.* p. 3.

With Devotions for the Altar. p. 195.

- II. *An Explanation of Daniel's Prophecy of
the LXX Weeks.* p. 251.

- III. *Two Dissertations on John iv. 24. con-
cerning the Nature of God and his true
Worship.*—God is a Spirit, and they that
worship him must worship in Spirit and
Truth. p. 343.

N. B. The Discourses and Dissertations con-
tain'd in this First Volume, and the Ser-
mon on *Numb. xi. 29.* with its Preface, at
the Beginning of the Second Volume, were
the only Pieces of this Posthumous Work,
that were intended, by the Author, for the
Press.

THE

THE
Primitive Communicant:

IN
THREE DISCOURSES

ON THE
Sacrament of the EUCHARIST,

IN WHICH
The SACRIFICE of CHRIST, and of
the CHURCH are fully explain'd.

WITH
DEVOTIONS for the ALTAR.



T H E

Primitive Communicant.

DISCOURSE I.

Concerning Sacrifice in general.

HEBREWS X. 8, 9.

Above, when he said, Sacrifice, and offering, and burnt offerings, and offerings for sin thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure therein (which are offered by the law);

Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.

THE greatest Benefit that was ever Sect. 1.
 conferr'd on Mankind was the Redemption wrought by *Christ Jesus*. The most excellent Worship that God ever taught his Church, is the Communion of the Body and Blood of *Christ*. He

accomplish'd our Redemption principally by the Sacrifice which he offer'd for us; and the Communion is a Sacrifice of Praise for the Redemption wrought by him. Therefore nothing is more necessary in order to the getting a clear Knowledge of the greatest Benefit that ever was bestowed on Men, and the most excellent Worship of the *Christian Church*, than rightly to understand the Nature of Sacrifice. Now to give you a clear Light in this point, I shall

- I. Shew the Original of Sacrifice.
- II. The Materials of which it consisted.
- III. The Manner of offering it to God.
- IV. The Ends for which Sacrifice was offer'd.
- V. The Manner of consuming it.
- VI. The great Advantage of worshipping God by Sacrifice instituted by Him.
- VII. I shall observe the great Abuses of Sacrifice mention'd in Scripture.
- VIII. I shall shew what Sacrifice is abolish'd, what not.

Sec. 2. I. As to the Original of Sacrifice, we are assur'd, it was practis'd by the Sons of *Adam*, during the Life-time of their Father. St. Paul says, * *Abel offer'd to God a greater Sacrifice than Cain*: Therefore

* Heb. xi. 4.

it

The Primitive Communicant.

it is evident they both offer'd Sacrifice. *Abel* would not have presum'd to have us'd this way of worshiping God, if he had not had the Precept and Example of his Father, or rather the Authority of God Himself for so doing. For *Abel* was a just, and pious Man. And the Apostle tells us he did it *by Faith*, and therefore did not act herein according to the Devices of his own Heart. It is evident, that at this time God did upon all occasions give Directions to *Adam*, and his Sons, and they could consult him when they saw reasons so to do; and it is not therefore to be thought that they would undertake to perform a Business of the greatest Moment, that is, the Worship of God, without first knowing His Will, as to the Manner of doing it. There is therefore no room to doubt but that God himself instructed, and commanded our first Parents to worship Him by Sacrifice.

*Abel's Offering, or Sacrifice, was * of Sect. 3. the Firstlings of his Flock, and of the Fat thereof, and the Lord had respect to him and his Offering. Noah upon his coming out of the Ark, † took of every clean Beast, and every clean Fowl, and offer'd to God Burnt-Offerings on the Altar; and the Lord smelled a sweet Savour: that is,*

* Gen. iv. 4.

† Gen. viii. 20, 21.

God was pleas'd with these Sacrifices, as Men are with a good Perfume. God, by declaring his Acceptance of the Sacrifices offer'd by these two eminent Servants of His, gave sufficient Encouragement to other Men to follow them in this way of Worship, though He had never requir'd Sacrifice by any exprefs command. But we have in Scripture some plain Examples of God's commanding Men to do Honour to Him by Sacrifice: Particularly He laid his * Commands on *Abraham* his Friend, to do this, and afterwards on *Job*. As all the Patriarchs worshiped God by way of Sacrifice, so their Posterity, while they sojourn'd in *Egypt*, did the same. They durst not indeed do it publicly for fear of provoking the Heathen Governours, and the People of the Country where they lived. Yet it appears that the Worship of God by Sacrifice was so known, and receiv'd a Practice, that to *serve God*: and to *offer Sacrifice to Him*, were Phrases of the same Signification; as appears by those words of † *Moses* to *Pharoah*, *Thou must give us Sacrifices, and Burnt-Offerings, unto the Lord our God: our Cattle shall also go with us; for thereof must we take to serve the Lord our God.*

* Gen. xv. 9. xxii. 2. Job xiii. 8. † Exod. x. 25, 26.

The Primitive Communicant.

7

Sect. 4.

As the *Israelites* had ever worshiped God by Sacrifice, so there is no reason to doubt but that they would always have continued to do so, tho' God had never given 'em the *Levitical* Law. The Lambs were requir'd to be offer'd to God in Sacrifice on the very Evening before the Departure out of *Egypt*, and were commanded to be offer'd every Year for the time to come at the Feast of the Passover. * And at the same time God claimed the First-born of all clean Cattel to be offer'd to Him, and these were as real Sacrifices as ever were brought to God's Altar, though not of the *Levitical* Sort. For both these Sacrifices were enjoined before the making of the Tabernacle, and the worshiping of the Golden Calf. Whereas the *Levitical* Law is justly believ'd to have been contriv'd on purpose to put a stop to such Idolatry for the future. Nay, in that very || Chapter which contains the Ten moral Commandments, God spake to them concerning Sacrifices of Sheep and Oxen. And here therefore I may give you a seasonable caution as to that Text *Jer. vii. 22, 23*, namely, that it ought to be render'd thus, *I spake not to your Fathers in the Day when I brought them forth out of Egypt, concerning the*

* Ex. xii. 24. 27.

xiii. 1.

Núm. xviii. 17.

Deut. xv. 19, 20.

|| Ex. xx. 24.

manner of Burnt-Offerings, and Sacrifices : by the manner, meaning those various Rites and Modes, prescrib'd in the three last Books of *Moses*. As for Sacrifice it self, it was establish'd long before the *Levitical* Law, and even from near the Beginning of *Adam's* Life, as hath been shew'd. And two new Sacrifices were enjoin'd at the very time of their going out of *Egypt*.

II. As to the Materials offer'd in Sacrifice of old, they were either,

Sect. 5.

1. Living Creatures. But three sorts of four footed Animals were offer'd by the *Jews*, * *Bullocks*, *Sheep*, and *Goats*; and of the winged Kind, *Turtle Doves* and *Pigeons* only; though some add *Sparrows*, in the case of *Jealousy*. The *Heathens* offer'd all sorts of living Creatures; even those that were esteemed unclean among the *Jews*. Nay, they sacrificed *Fish*, as the *Jews* never did.

Sect. 6.

2. Or else they were things without life. *Cain* † sacrific'd of the Fruits of the Earth. God rejected this Sacrifice not on account of the Materials, but for want of Faith, and other good Dispositions in him that offer'd it. The most usual Sacrifice of this sort both among the *Jews*, and the *Gentiles* was a *Cake*, or other Composition of the *Flour*, or *Meal* of *Wheat*, or *Barley*,

* Lev. xiv. 4.

† Gen. iv. 3.

with Salt, to which the *Jews* by the Law of *Moses* added Oyl. This is call'd a Meat-Offering in the *English* Translation of the Old Testament. I rather choose to call it a Meal-Offering: Because this Word expresseth the material of which it chiefly consisted. The *Greek* Translators do rarely call it by any other Name but that of SACRIFICE. And none better knew these things than those Translators, who turn'd the five Books of *Moses* from the *Hebrew* into the *Greek* Tongue above 250 Years before the Birth of *Christ*. The Writers of the New Testament do generally follow these Translators as often as they cite the Writings of *Moses*. *Every Sacrifice shall be salted with Salt*, saith * *St. Mark*. It is evident, that by Sacrifice he meant the Meal-Offering. So *St. Luke* calls the Offerings of Living Creatures by the name of *Slain Beasts*, but gives to the Meal-Offerings the just Title of *Sacrifices*. Yet in the Place of the Old Testament from which this Text is cited, our *English* Translators call the Slain Beasts *Sacrifices*, and the other barely *Offerings*: And so they do indeed throughout the Old Testament; for which I cannot praise them.

* Compare Mark ix. 49.
Amos v. 25.

Lev. xi. 13. Acts vii. 42.

Sect. 7.

No Man can doubt but that whatever hath Life is, on that account, more valuable than Fruit, or Corn. And God's Acceptance of the Bloody Sacrifices offer'd by *Abel, Noah, Abraham*, and other eminent Men, brought these Sacrifices into great Reputation in the early Times. The Sacrifice of *Christ Jesus* was not accomplish'd without the shedding of his Blood: And therefore the Offerings of living Creatures were more fit Types of the GREAT SACRIFICE, than the Offering of a Cake, or of a Loaf.

Sect. 8.

Yet there is just Reason to believe that there were many more unbloody, than bloody Sacrifices offer'd by the *Jews*. For all bloody Sacrifices had a Meal, and Drink-Offering attending them, though the *Rabbies* except the Offerings for Sin, and Trespass; * and in all Cases a Meal-Offering by it self, served as well as if a living Creature were join'd with it, as one may see by comparing the Second Chapter of *Leviticus* with the First and Third. And he who could not spare a Beast, or Fowl, or had it not to offer, might have his Sin as effectually aton'd by a *Meal-Offering*, as by a *Bloody-Sacrifice*. †

* Num. xv, xxviii, xxix,

† Lev. v. 11, 12.

When a living Creature was offer'd, and slain at the Altar, and had a Meal-Offering attending it, a Drink-Offering was always added, and never was us'd but with such a Bloody Sacrifice, and this was of the best Wine; yet this is never call'd a Sacrifice, as the Meal-Offering very often is: * Nay, when all three were offer'd together, not the Drink-Offering, not the living Creature, but the Meal-Offering was call'd the *Sacrifice*: I say it was so call'd by the *Greek* Translators near thirty Times one after another in two Chapters, (viz.) *Numb.* xxviii. xxix. And these Translators lived in the Time when these Offerings and Sacrifices were practis'd, and were some of the most learned *Jews* of that Age, and therefore did better understand the nature of these Things than any now living. Further the Meal-Offering, on what occasion soever it were brought to the Altar, was stiled † *Most Holy*. The Flesh of no Bloody Sacrifice (except it were for Sin and Trespass) was distinguish'd with so high a Title. Nay, the Meal-Offering was in one respect more honour'd than any other Sacrifice; I mean that the High-Priest offer'd a Sacrifice of this sort, not only upon his Consecration, but every Day of his Life. † As this

* *Num.* xv. xxviii. xxix. † *Lev.* ii. 3. x. 12. vii. 1, 7.

was an Institution of God by * *Moses*; so *Josephus* assures us that this Sacrifice remained in use till his time, who survived the Destruction of *Jerusalem* and the Temple. And it is well known that these unbloody Sacrifices were chosen, and practis'd by the Ancient *Greeks* and *Romans*, by *Pythagoras*, and others of the best *Heathens*, who thought the killing, or eating of Animals unlawful.

Sect. 10. I shall only farther observe of the Materials to be offer'd in Sacrifice, that they were to be the best in their kind; the † living Creatures without spot or blemish, the Meal, and other Ingredients, the most fine, sweet, and perfect. The *Greek* Interpreters express this excellently well, by saying, that Men shou'd offer such Things to God, as were most pleasing and acceptable to themselves. The *Rabbies* say, that the very Wood, with which the Sacrifices were burnt, was to be of the best sort, not Worm-eaten, or such as had formerly been used in building Houses. || A Bullock, or Lamb that had any thing Superfluous, or any thing lacking in its parts, might be a voluntary Offering for the use of the Priest, or the repairs of the Temple, as the Doctors understand it; but was not qualify'd

* Lev. vi. 20, 23. See *Josephus Antiquities*, Book 3. Ch. 10. Sect. 7. *Hudson's Edit.* l. 5. † Num. xviii. 29. xxvii. 31. || Lev. xxii. 19.—23.

to become a Sacrifice on the Altar. I do not say that Men were always to offer absolutely the best, but only the best in that Kind, of which the Sacrifice was by God's Law to be. * If a Ruler, instead of the Kid which was assigned for his Sin-Offering, had brought the best Bullock that could be purchased with Money to the Altar; he might by this means have made a show of Generosity, and yet he had been defective in point of Piety. For in this case, the best Kid was the best Sacrifice; because this was what God required.

III. As to the Manner of offering Sacrifice, we must distinguish between the various Rites that were used in some, or even in most Sacrifices, and those Actions which were esteemed necessary, and used as such in all Sacrifices whatsoever.

I. Slaying was necessary for the most part when a living Creature was the Sacrifice, yet slaying was not the Rite, whereby the Sacrifice was offer'd: For any common Person, though he neither was a Priest, nor the Owner of the Sacrifice, might kill it. But none but the Priest, or the Owner, could in any Sense be said to offer it. † The Bullock and Goat, whose Blood were to be carry'd into the Holy of Holies, and some other

* Lev. iv. 22, 23.

† Lev. xvi. 6. 9. 11. 14. 15.

special Sacrifices, were to be kill'd by the Priest: Yet even in this Case, the slaying was not the Action by which the Sacrifice was offer'd, or the Atonement made. While the Animals were yet alive they were offer'd to God; and the Atonement was made by thus offering them, and by carrying their Blood into the Holy Place, and sprinkling it upon the Mercy-Seat. The Scape-Goat was twice offer'd, yet not slain at all; though he seems to be the most atoning Sacrifice that was offer'd in the whole Year. * *Aaron*

was to lay both his Hands on him, and to confess over him all the Iniquities of the Children of Israel, and to put them on the Head of the Goat; and the Goat was to bear him all the Iniquities of the Children of Israel to a Land not inhabited.

Sect. 12.

2. Much less was the laying the Sacrifice in whole, or in part on an Altar absolutely necessary. The Lamb slain at the first Passover in *Egypt* was not laid on any Altar; there is no reason to believe that the *Israelites* had Altars in that Country, however, it cannot be suppos'd every House had one. Altars were principally intended for the more convenient burning of Sacrifices. But the Lamb

* Lev. xvi. 9, 10. 20. 29.

offer'd at the Passover * was not to be burnt as a Sacrifice: only what remain'd of it till the Morning was to be cast into the Fire, not with an intent to offer these remains to God, but to prevent Profanation. So what was left of any Peace-Offering till the third Day was also to be cast into the Fire for the same reason. Yet this Lamb was † the Sacrifice of the Lord's Passover. God by way of Excellence calls it || My Sacrifice. You may observe that the Passover to be offer'd in after Ages was call'd a Sacrifice, as well as the first that was offer'd in Egypt; and when the Jews came to have a settled place of publick Worship, the Blood of the Paschal (*) Lamb was sprinkled on the Altar. The (†) Two Wave-Loaves were expressly call'd a new Sacrifice, by the Greek Translators, yet could not be laid on the Altar, because they were leavened. The Persians and some other People sacrific'd without Altars or Fire.

Sprinkling the Blood on an Altar was a Sect. 13. Rite injoin'd in most of the Levitical Bloody Sacrifices. For want of Altars, the Israelites in Egypt were to (||) sprinkle the Blood of the Lamb on the Door-posts.

* Exod. xii. 10. † Lev. vii. 17. || Exod. xii. 27.
xxiii. 18. (*) 2 Chr. xxxv. 11. (†) Lev. xxiii.
16, 17. ii. 11. Exod. x. 2, 3. (||) Exod. xii. 7.

Yet this Ceremony was used in offering this Lamb, after the *Israelites* had a fix'd Altar, * and settled place of Publick Worship; but the Blood of the Scape-Goat could not be so sprinkled. Nor does it appear that this Ceremony was ever used before the Deliverance of the *Israelites* out of *Egypt*; nor did the *Heathens* use it at all, or however they did not make it a necessary Rite of offering their Bloody Sacrifices. And if waving the Sacrifice, or carrying the Blood of it into the Holy of Holies in the Temple at *Jerusalem*, or any such like singular Ceremony, had been so necessary, that no Sacrifice could be rightly offer'd without it; then the generality of the Oblations, made either at the *Jewish* or *Gentile* Altars, were no Sacrifices at all. For these Ceremonies were rarely used, and only in some special Cases. And the Meal Offerings must of necessity have been presented to God in some other manner; and such were the majority of the Sacrifices which were offer'd by the *Jews*.

Sec. 14.

4. In truth the only necessary Action for the Offering of Sacrifices, never omitted either by the *Jews* or *Gentiles*, was that of Prayer addressed to that God to whom the Sacrifice was presented. The very

* 2 Chr. xxxv. 11.

Nature

Nature of Sacrifice directed men to offer it in this manner. The way of presenting any Thing to our Superiors, taught us by common Sense, is to address our selves to them in an humble respectful manner; and to declare that we intend them the Gift, as a Token of our Honour and Esteem. And as all Mankind did of old worship God (whether true or false) by giving him some of the best they had, or what they thought would be most acceptable to him; so they did all naturally fall into the same way of offering them, that is, by Prayer. They did indeed all use other Rites, in which they differ'd from each other. But they all agreed in the main point, that is, in presenting the Sacrifice by Prayer. There is indeed no plain express Mention of this in the *Levitical* Law; at least not in the *English* Translation of it: nor was there any Occasion for *Moses* to speak of this in Words at length; because the Priests, and People had been all used to the offering of Sacrifice, and well knew that it was to be done by Prayer. They well knew that the Patriarchs * *built Altars, and called on the name of the Lord*, that is, they offer'd Sacrifices on the Altars which they had raised, and offer'd those Sacrifices by call-

* Gen. xii. 7. xiii. 4. xxy. 26.

ing on God's Name; therefore in this particular they wanted no Instructions. But as to the new Rites and Ceremonies contained in the *Levitical Law*, *Moses* saw just occasion to be large and particular in mentioning them; because the whole Nation had hitherto been Strangers to them. There is one general Expression which is often repeated by *Moses*, and implies Prayer, that is *making atonement*. For this signifies the Priest's solemn Request to God, that he would accept the Sacrifice. As often therefore as it is said that *Aaron*, or his Sons were to make atonement, so often we are taught this Truth, that Sacrifice was offer'd to God by Prayer; or that it was the Priest's Office to beg of God, that the Sacrifice might be effectual to the end for which it was offer'd. And we are assured by the *Jewish* Writers, that this was the constant practice of their Priests. And it is certain that in this point the *Gentiles* agreed with them; that is, they invoked the Name of their Gods, and beseeched them to receive the Gifts, or Oblations, which they brought to their Altars. And however they varied in other matters, in this particular they were all of one Mind.

Sect. 15.

It must not be omitted that all living Creatures were to be offer'd before they were slain. If the private man brought
a Bul-

a Bullock, or other Animal for a Burnt-offering, or a Peace-offering, or a Sin-offering, to the Altar, * he himself was to offer it at the door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation, and he was to do it by Prayer; for he was to lay his Hands upon it, and the Rite of laying on of Hands always implied Prayer, say the *Hebrew Masters*; and after he had thus offer'd it, then it was to be killed. If a Sin-offering was presented to God for the whole Congregation, then the † Elders were to lay their hands on the Head of the Sacrifice. If the living Creature were intended to be a Sacrifice for consecrating of Priests, or for purging the whole Nation, Priests, People, and Tabernacle; in these cases, the || High Priest, or one of the Priests at least, was to perform the office of laying on of Hands, and so offering the Sacrifice by Prayer; and the living Creature was in no case to be slain, till it had thus been solemnly offer'd. It is true the Sacrifice was again to be offer'd by the Priest, when he sprinkled the Blood, or put it on the horns of the Altar, or brought it into the Holy of Holies; and it was by this Oblation of the Priest that the Atonement was principally made: Yet it was a

* Lev. i. 3, 4, 5. iii. 1, 2. iv. 4. † Lev. iv. 15.
 || Lev. viii. 14, 15. 18, 19. xvi. 9. 11. 15.

stated Rule, that the living Creature shou'd be once offer'd while alive.

Sect. 16.

IV. As to the Ends for which Sacrifice was offer'd by them of Old, they were either,

1. Such as regarded God ; or
2. The men in whose behalf they were offer'd.

Yet here I must premise, that though, for method's sake, I make a distinction between those Ends of Sacrifice which regard God, and those which regard Men ; I would not be thought by this to mean, that any Sacrifice could duly be offer'd, but that the Intention of him that brought it to the Altar must be to do honour to God, and procure good to himself at the same time. Even when the principal Design of the Sacrifice was to acknowledge God's sovereign Dominion, and Goodness, or to praise him for some Benefit received ; yet it was proper, and reasonable, that he who offer'd it should also have an eye to his own Good and Welfare, and to hope that God, in consideration of his present Gift or Offering, would for the future treat him as his devout, grateful Servant, or as one that had a just Sense of his Power and Mercy. And

Sect. 17.

I. In truth all Sacrifice was chiefly design'd as an Honour to God. As all Money, or other Materials given for the use of God's House, or the Maintenance of his

his Service, are call'd the *Gifts*, or *Offerings of God* ('tis our Saviour's * own Language); so whatever was devoutly laid on the Altar by way of Sacrifice, was call'd *God's Bread*, or *Food* †. For the Altar was dignified with the Title of || *God's Table* by two of the Prophets, *Ezekiel* and *Malachi*, because that which was placed thereon was, in a most singular and eminent manner, offer'd to the Divine Majesty Tho' the Sacrifice was offer'd in order to obtain any Favour from God, or by way of Gratitude for Mercies already obtained; yet he that brought the Sacrifice must do it upon this Principle, that he believed God to be the Fountain of all Goodness, the Author of every good Gift, the Maker and Donour of all that we can enjoy, or hope for. On this account Sacrifice was ever esteem'd a Service due to God alone. It was an Angel that said to *Manoah*, (*) *If thou wilt offer a burnt-offering, thou must offer it unto the Lord.* God ever claim'd Sacrifice as particularly due to him, on account of his being Sovereign Lord of the Universe. Whoever among the *Israelites* offer'd a Burnt-offering or Sacrifice, and brought it not to the door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation (where the Altar of Burnt-offerings stood,) to offer

* Luke xxi. 4. † Lev. xxi. 6. || Ezekiel xli. 22.
xliv. 16. Mal. i. 7.--12. (') Judges xiii. 16.

it unto the Lord, it was declared, * *That man shall be cut off from among the People.*

Sect. 18.

2. If we consider Sacrifice with regard to the Men in whose behalf it was offer'd, the end of it must be, either

(1.) To obtain some Benefit to themselves; or,

(2) To Thank God for some Benefit received; as hath been already hinted.

(1.) Sacrifices offer'd to God for the obtaining of common Mercies, as Health, Success in Business, Victory over Enemies, or the like, were Peace-offerings, and Burnt-offerings. But the greatest Mercy to be procured by the old *Levitical* Sacrifices, was forgiveness of Sin, and there were two sorts of Sacrifices provided for this purpose; the first I shall call *purgative*, the other *properly expiatory* Sacrifices. The *purgative* Sacrifices, were those which were appointed, and offer'd, for purging Men, and things, from their Natural Unworthiness to be employ'd in the Service of God, and from all Defilements contracted by any other means, which rendered them incapable of appearing, or being used in the publick Worship. This Unworthiness, or Unfitness, for the Service or Worship of God, is called *Sin* and *Iniquity* in the *Levitical* Law. † Thus the Ashes of the Red Heifer mingled with Water are called a Pu-

* Lev. xvii. 8, 9.

† Num. xix. 9. 13. 15. 20.

rification for Sin. Here *Moses* by *Sin* did not mean Real Guilt, such as makes Men liable to future Punishment; but only an Impurity occasion'd by being under the same roof with a dead Corpse. And any Vessel that was not cover'd was under the same *Sin*, or Impurity. And he who was in this condition, and went into the Tabernacle before he was purg'd, is said to *defile the Sanctuary of the Lord*. It is said of the High Priest, that he *shall bear, or take away the Iniquity of the Holy Place, and the Holy Things.** This is best explained by considering the most remarkable part of the High-Priest's Office yearly performed on the tenth Day of the seventh Month. He killed a Bullock to make a Sin-offering for himself, and his House, and the Goat on which the Lord's Lot fell for a Sin-offering for the People, and carried the Blood of each severally into the Holy of Holies, to make an Atonement for all the Congregation; not only for them, but *for the Holy place, and for the Altar, to reconcile the Holy place, the Tabernacle, and the Altar.* The Reason given for the Atonement of these senseless Things, which were incapable of any real Guilt is this, that † *they had remained among the Children of Israel in*

* Ex. xxviii. 38.
16, 18, 19, 20. 33.

Numb. xviii. 1.

† Lev. xvi.

the midst of their uncleanness; therefore there was a necessity to *reconcile* them, or to offer these solemn Sacrifices to intreat the Divine Majesty, that he would accept the Services performed by these Priests, People and Things, notwithstanding the Defilements which they had incur'd.

And it is evident, that without this Reconciliation, or Atonement, the Levitical Services had expir'd, and been at end every Year: therefore by these Sacrifices the Right of these Priests, and People, to perform their several parts in Divine Worship were yearly renew'd; and a Tenure in God's House for the Term of one Year next coming clearly purchas'd; and the Impurity of the House it self taken off, and remov'd for the following Year; that is, till the next tenth Day of the seventh Month, when these Devotions must again be repeated. It is not to be denied, that Atonement was made by these Sacrifices for all manner of Sin, and Pollution, but yet only so far forth as it barr'd Men from the Privilege of appearing in the presence of God, or in the place of publick Worship; not so as to free the Sinner from the Punishment due to him for transgressing the Law. This gives much light to the former part of that Chapter from whence my Text is taken. In the first Verse the
Apostle

Apostle observes, that *the Law could never with those Sacrifices, which they offer'd Year by Year, consecrate for ever to the Service of God them that came thereto.* For it is plain that Priests and People were a-new consecrated every Year on the Day, when the Priest enter'd into the Holy of Holies. The Apostle proceeds in the next Verse upon this Supposition. *For then, says he, (that is if those Sacrifices could for ever have taken off the Unworthiness of the Priests and People for the service of God, and given them a Consecration for ever, or during Life) would they not have ceased to be offer'd? Yes, certainly; for the Worshipers being once [for ever] purg'd, would have had no more Conscience of Sin;* by Sin, meaning their Unfitness to appear before God in his Tabernacle, or Temple. *But (as he proceeds in the third Verse) in those Sacrifices remembrance of Sins is made again every Year;* that is, Priests and People are again reminded of their Incapacity to perform, or to join in the publick Worship, by the Atonement, or Reconciliation made for them, and even for the Holy Place, and its Utensils. In our *Christian Assemblies* remembrance is made again of Sin, not only every Year, but every Day of our Publick Assemblies. But no remem-

membrance is made of our Disability, or Unfitness to perform our parts in Divine Worship: For this was taken off once for all from the *Christian Church* by the personal Sacrifice of *Christ*, as shall hereafter appear. What was done for us by the great Sacrifice could not be effected by those of the Law. For (as *St. Paul* proceeds v. 4.) *it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should [for ever] take away sin*, that is, that they should effectually remove all at once Mens Unfitness for the publick Worship of God, or give them a perpetual Right of Access to Him. There is no such natural Efficacy in the Blood of Bulls, and Goats; nor did God by his Appointment or Institution annex any such Privilege to these Sacrifices; but declar'd the contrary by commanding these purgative Sacrifices to be renewed every Year. When the Apostle says, * *without shedding of blood is no remission*, he means Remission of this Incapacity to be employ'd in the publick Service of God. For he had in the words next before observ'd, that *by the Law all things were purged with blood*, and the occasion he had to say this was, his having mention'd the Sacrifices, with which *Moses* ratified the Covenant between God and the *Israelites*;

† Heb. ix. 22.

for he had said that with the Blood of these Sacrifices * *Moses* sprinkled the Book [of the Law,] and all the People, as likewise the Tabernacle, and all the *Vessels of the Ministry*. And it is evident that by being thus sprinkled, they were by the Apostle esteemed to be purged from their natural Impurity, and from all Defilements that could disqualify them for the Divine Worship. And it can scarce be conceived how the Book of the Law, and the Utensils, or Vessels, could have any Impurity, but what proceeded from the Nature of the Materials of which they were made. For they were all new, and had never been us'd either by Priests, or People. But the Fall of our first Parents had shed a Stain, and diffus'd a Contagion not only through the Blood of their Posterity, but through all the whole Terrestrial Globe.

But the *Jews* too had Sacrifices that were Sect. 19. *properly expiatory*; I mean such as being duly offer'd took away the Guilt of immoral Actions, and free'd the Transgressor from the Punishment due to his Sin. Such were those Sacrifices, which were called *Trespass-offerings*, concerning which God said by *Moses*, † *The man shall bring his trespass-offering to the*

* Heb. xix. 21.

† Lev. vi. 6, 7.

Lord, a ram without blemish; and the priest shall make an atonement for him before the Lord, and it shall be forgiven him. And I conceive, it might be truly said of these Sacrifices, according to the common, vulgar Sense of the Words, that the Worshipers who offer'd them, had no reason to have *any more conscience of that Sin*, for which they had made this Oblation; and that therefore the Apostle, in the foregoing Verses of this Chapter, did not speak of these Sacrifices which were *properly expiatory*, but of purgative Sacrifices only. But it is to be remember'd that these Sacrifices, which took away the real Guilt of immoral vicious Actions, were not allowed for such as had sinn'd presumptuously, or with a high Hand, but only for lesser Crimes.

Sect. 20.

(2). The other main End in offering Sacrifice was, that Men might express their Thanks to God for Benefits receiv'd. For this the Law of *Moses* assign'd no particular Animal to be offer'd, but left it to the discretion of the Party concern'd. But the Meal-offering on this occasion was to be larger than usual, and to consist of the greatest Variety, not only Cakes, * but Wafers, and leavened Bread was to be brought to the Altar. † If to his Peace-Offering he ad-

* Lev. vii. 11.--14. xxii. 19. † 2 Chron. xxix. 31.

ded a Burnt-Offering, that was to be a Male. But this last was expected of none but such as were wealthy and generous. Vows differ'd in nothing from other Sacrifices of Thanksgivings but this, that they were solemnly promis'd to God, and the particular living Creatures assign'd for Sacrifice by the Owner, on Condition that God would grant him Relief from his present Danger, or Difficulties, according to that of the Psalmist; * *I will pay thee my vows which I promised with my lips, and spake with my mouth, when I was in trouble.*

These Thank-Offerings, are frequent-Sect. 21. ly call'd † *Free will-offerings* by our Translators, *Confessions* by the Old Greek Translators. To explain this, I must observe to you, that all Sacrifices do take their Names from the End for which they were offer'd. Therefore in the *Hebrew* and *Greek*, the Animal, or other Material offer'd to expiate Sin, is called *Sin* or *Trespas*; the Sacrifice offer'd for Peace (which in the *Hebrew* Tongue signifies Health, and every thing that is good) is call'd Peace; but the *Greeks* render it Safety. And for the same reason the Animal, or other Materials offer'd to

* Ps. lxi. 12.
Ezek. xlv. 12.

† Lev. xxii. 18.

Deu. xii. 17.

God by way of Gratitude for Favours confer'd, is call'd *Thanks* or *Praise*, in the *Hebrew* and *Greek*. And for the same reason they at other Places called them *Free-wills*, or *Confessions*; because these Sacrifices were offer'd with an intention to confess, or acknowledge God's Goodness, and their own *Free-will*, or *Liberality*. But these Confessions do ever imply a material Sacrifice, that is a living Creature, a Meal-Offering, and a Drink-Offering. * When Peace, Sin, Thanks, or Praise, do in the Original, signify a Sacrifice, our *English* Translators do commonly call them *Peace-offerings*, *Sin-offerings*, *Thank-offerings*, or the like. But they have not always added *Offering*, where in Truth they ought. And though in the Old Testament they us'd the Word † *Free-will Offering*, yet not in the new; for they say *Jesus Christ witnessed a good Confession before Pontius Pilate*; when the original Words do clearly signify that *Christ Jesus confirm'd, or ratify'd the good Free-will Offering under Pontius Pilate*: They say, that *Timothy had made a good Confession*, where the *Greek* says || *He had offer'd the good Free-will Of-*

* Pl. I. 14.--23. † Hosea iv. 8. 2 Cor. v. 21.
 Heb. ix. 28. || 1 Tim. vi. 12, 13.

fering. And they call Jesus Christ *the High Priest of our Profession*, where the Apostle calls him *the High Priest of our Free will Offering*. And they say * *Let us hold fast our Profession*, where the Apostle says, *Let us hold fast our Free-will Offering*.

I see no occasion to enlarge on the Festival Sacrifices, because they may all be reduc'd to some one of the Heads above mention'd.

V. As to the manner of consuming Sa-
crifice, it hath before been hinted that in the *Levitical* Sacrifices, some of the Animal, and of the Cake, or other material, was burnt on the Altar, for the most part; and that there were some Sacrifices call'd *Holocausts*, or whole Burnt-offerings, because they were entirely consumed on the Fire-hearth of the Altar. The Burning was not esteem'd the Action of the Priests, who offer'd it, but of God; who by this means was believed to accept it. For the Fire of the Altar came down from Heaven, † when the Tabernacle and Temple were first erected, and this Fire was always preserv'd alive, to shew that the Sacrifices in whole, or in part consumed by it, were graciously receiv'd

* Heb. iii. 1. iv. 14. x. 23. † Levit. ix. 24.
2 Chron. vii. 1.

by God. The laying the Flesh on the Fire, was indeed a Rite by which the Priests offer'd it to God: But the Burning of it was esteem'd the Act, by which God declared his acceptance of the Sacrifice. It hath indeed been observ'd, that some real Sacrifices were not at all laid on the Altar, and therefore could not be burnt either in whole or part, as other Sacrifices were. But in this Case God's Command and Institution did give sufficient Assurance of the Sacrifice being accepted, and that altogether as effectually, as if it had been consum'd by the Altar-Fire. It is sufficient that what was offer'd to God be consum'd, or otherwise disposed of as God directs. who hath the sole Right of Sacrifices offer'd to him.

Sect. 23.

And I suppose it certain in fact, that the much greater part of the Sacrifices was generally reserv'd for a religious Feast. The Scripture speaks of * *Noah's* offering Burnt-sacrifice only, yet *Josephus* says, he made a Feast too for his Family. And they who are best versed in the *Jewish* Learning agree in this, that Burnt-Offerings had always Peace-Offerings joined with them (except on the tenth Day of the seventh Month, which was a National Feast); that so Materials might

* Gen. viii. 20.

not be wanting, for the Enteratinment of them who officiated, or assisted at the Solemnity. * *Jacob offered sacrifice upon the mount, and call'd his brethren to eat Bread, and they did eat Bread.* And eating Bread is a known Phrase for a Banquet. † *Jethro took a burnt-offering, and sacrifices for God, and Aaron came, and all the elders of Israel, and eat bread with him before God.* The Lambs offer'd in Sacrifice at the Passover were to be wholly consum'd by eating even the Heads with the Legs, and Purtenances thereof. Thus it was before the Law: By the Law sufficient care was taken to continue this Practice. The whole Carcass of the Peace-Offering was restor'd to him who brought it to the Altar, for the Entertainment of himself, his Family, and Friends; || only the Breast, and right Shoulder was the Priest's Portion; (yet if it was a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, the Flesh belong'd to the Priest, according to the *Greek* Interpreters, who daily saw those Sacrifices practic'd; for thus they translate the latter clause of the 14th and the beginning of the 15th Verse of the viith Chapter of *Leviticus*: *The heave-offering shall belong to the Priest that sprinkled the blood of the peace-offering, and the flesh*

* Gen. xxxi. 54. † Exod. xviii. || Lev. vii. 31,--34.

of the peace-offering for praise, shall belong to him.) No part of these but the Fat, Cawl, and Kidneys were burnt on the Altar. * And the same may be said of the Sin, and Trespas-offerings, save that the Rump of these was also to be burnt. But then the Carcasses of these last Sacrifices were reserv'd, not for the Entertainment of the Layman who brought it to the Altar, but of the † Priest who officiated at the offering of it, and his Sons. All Festival Sacrifices were appointed for this purpose that all *Israelites might rejoice before the Lord*, and eat, and drink in a more plentiful, and sumptuous manner than at other Times; and for this purpose Peace-offerings were enjoined at these times as well as whole Burnt-offerings. Sometimes the Feast was the principal End of the Sacrifice, with regard to Men. † *David* on his bringing the Ark to *Zion* offer'd so many Peace-offerings, that every one of *Israel* had a good piece of Flesh. || And when he sacrific'd his Vows, he declar'd, the Poor should eat, and be satisfy'd. King *Josiah*, and his Princes, and some generous *Levites* imitated him in this magnificent Devotion.

* Lev. iii. 3. 6. iv. 8.—10. 35. * vii. 3. † vi. 26.
vii. 7. Num. xviii. 9. || 1 Chron. xvi. 3. Psal.
xxij. 26, 2 Chron. xxxv. 7.—9.

The Meal-Offering was wholly burnt, Sect. 24.
 if the living Creature offer'd at the same
 time, were so to be consumed; * as like-
 wise if it was offer'd in behalf of the
 Priest. In all other cases the Remainder
 of the Meal-offering was reserved for the
 Priest's Eating. The People were not
 allowed to taste of the Meal-offering pro-
 perly so call'd. And it does not appear
 that either Priest or People did at all
 partake of the drink-offering, but that
 it was wholly pour'd out on the Altar.
 If so, then when the Psalmist says, † *I*
will take the Cup of Salvation, his mean-
 ing must be, that he would take it into
 his Hands in order to reach it up to the
 Priest, who stood on the ascent to the
 Altar, that he might pour it out before
 the Lord. And what makes this seem
 very probable is, that the Priest was for-
 bid to drink Wine when he went into
 the Sanctuary. || And it can scarce be
 thought that the Wine was allowed to the
 People, when the Priests were forbid it.

The (*) Remainder of the Meal-offer- Sect. 25.
 ing, the Sin-offering, and the Trespass-
 offering, which was the Priest's part, was
 call'd and esteem'd (†) *most Holy*, and *the*
Bread, or Food of God, as well as what

* Lev. vi. 23. Num. xviii. 9. † Ps. cxvi. 12.
 || Levit. x. 9. (*) Levit. vi. 16. x. 12, 13. vii. 7.
 (†) Lev. ii. 3. xxi. 22.

was burnt on the Altar. The Remainder of the Peace-offering never hath any such high Character given to it, but was only esteem'd *Holy* in a lesser Degree, it was a * *kallow'd Thing*. The Law was not more precise in any one Point than concerning the manner of eating these Remainders; what was *most Holy* was to be eaten by the † Priest that offer'd it, and his Sons only, and they were confin'd to the Holy Place, that is, the Court before the Sanctuary where the Altar of Burnt-offering stood, while they were feasting themselves with these sacred Provisions. || They might eat the Shoulders, and Breasts of their Peace-offerings, and all their *Holy Things* in any Place that was clean, and their whole Families might join with them in this Entertainment, but no Stranger, nor hir'd Servant.

Sect. 26.

The Benefit, or good Success of the Sacrifice did very much depend upon the Priests and Peoples eating the Remainder of the Sacrifice in a proper manner, according to the Rules which God had prescribed. Whatever Priest (*) or Layman eat of the Flesh, or other Materials of a Peace-offering, while he was under any Uncleaness, *he was to be cut off from*

* Lev. xix. 8: † Levit. vi. 16. 26. x. 12, 13. || xxii. 10, &c. x. 14. (*) Levit. xxii. 9. vii. 15.-21. xix. 7.

his People, and if he kept it till it was stale, it is declared, that *the Sacrifice should not be accepted*. Moses tells the Sons of Aaron, that God had given the Sin-offering to be eaten by them, * *to bear away the iniquity of the Congregation, to make atonement for them before the Lord*. And when Aaron excuses himself for his having omitted to eat the Sin-offering that Day, because he was under legal Disqualification, (that is, he was mourning for his Sons Nadab and Abihu, or had some Uncleanneſs upon him) he concludes by ſaying, *If I had eaten the Sin-offering to day, ſhould it have been accepted in the ſight of God?* By which he plainly intimates that it would not have been accepted, if it had been eaten by him, while he was under his preſent Defilement. And therefore God ſtrictly charges the Priests † *that they don't prophane the Holy things of the Children of Iſrael, and bring upon themſelves the Iniquity of Tranſgreſſion in eating of the Holy things*. And it is obſervable that the worſt of High-Prieſts, Annas, and Caiaphas, and the other Jews that proſecuted our Bleſſed Lord at his Tryal, and made no Conſcience of ſhed-

* Lev. x. 17.-19.

† Lev. xxii. 15, 16. ſecund.

ding the Blood of the Just, and Holy Jesus, yet took special care of not being defil'd, * when they were to eat the Passover.

Sect. 27. It was the Universal Sentiment of the Antients, that by offering Sacrifice, Men did enter into Covenant, and Communion with that God whom they thus worshipped, and with one another. And this Notion was express'd by sharing the Sacrifice between God, and them who offer'd it. It is St. Paul's † observation, that they who eat of the *Sacrifice*, are *Partakers*, or rather *Communicants of the Altar*; and therefore with that God, whose Table the Altar was. God spake of the *Israelites*, as Men *that had made a Covenant with him by Sacrifice* ||. *Abraham* offer'd to God, at his Command, an Heifer of three Years old, a She-Goat, and a Ram of the same Age, with a Turtle-Dove, and a young Pigeon; and it is said, *the same Day the Lord made a Covenant with Abraham* (*.) When *Moses* came down from the Mount, and had fully declared to the People all that God had given him in charge, *and the People had answer'd with one voice, All that the Lord hath said unto Thee we will*

* John xviii. 28.

† 1 Cor. x. 18.

|| Psal. l. 5.

(*) Gen. xv. 9.--18.

do, *Moses* is said to have built an Altar and sent young Men (that is, First-born Sons, who were the Priests till the Family of * *Aaron* was set apart for the Holy Ministry) and they offer'd *Burnt-offerings, and sacrific'd Peace-offerings*: These last mention'd were on purpose for a religious Feast for the People, as hath been observ'd, *Seet.* xxiii. And thus they communicated with God by eating at his Altar. And it is added, *Moses took the Blood, and sprinkled it on the People, and said, Behold the Blood of the Covenant, which the Lord hath made with you, &c.* And as the Covenant was first struck, so it was continued, by Sacrifice. Every single Person enter'd into it by Circumcision; but the whole Nation was united to God, and each other, by having one Altar of Burnt-offerings, and worshipping one God in the same Place, and Manner. The *Reubenites* and *Gadites*, by building † a new Altar, gave occasion to the other Tribes to suspect that they intended a Revolt, or Apostasy from God, and the Common-wealth of *Israel*. But it appear'd upon enquiry, that they did it with a quite contrary View. For they declared they had erected this Altar as a Monument, or Testimony of their Communi-

* *Exod.* xxiv. 1.—8. † *Josh.* xxii.

on with the one God, and the other Tribes; for they were afraid, if they had not used this caution, lest it should be said in after Ages, that *they had no part in the Lord.*

Sect. 28.

As all Sacrifices were intended to be Rites of Covenant, and Communion between God and his People; so the Meal-offering was more peculiarly intended for this purpose. And for this reason the *Israelites* were commanded to make Salt one Ingredient of all their Meal-offerings; because Salt was always esteemed a Token or Symbol of Society and Friendship. Therefore God by *Moses* gives this Charge to the *Israelites*, *Every oblation of thy Meal-offering thou shalt season it with salt; * neither shalt thou suffer the salt of the covenant of thy God to be lacking from thy Meal-offering.*

VI. I proceed to shew the advantage of worshipping God by Sacrifice instituted by Him.

Sect. 29.

I. Prayer, and Praise are commonly esteemed the most perfect Worship of God. But now Prayer, and Praise, are necessarily imply'd in Sacrifice. It was to this End that Men built Altars, and offer'd Sacrifice that they might more effectually

* Levit. ii. 13.

call on the Name of the Lord, as hath before been intimated, *Sect.* xiv. All that will allow the antient People to have been endu'd with common Sense must grant that when they offer'd Sacrifice, they did it with an intention to declare their Belief of the Power, and Goodness of that God, to whom they paid this Devotion, and to honour him by acknowledging the Mercies they had receiv'd from his Bounty, or to beg of him what they wanted, and thereby declare their Belief that he only was able to grant it. And they are mistaken who suppose that these were dumb, internal Prayers and Praises, offer'd only by the Word of the Mind, or express'd by actions only; they declared to God the secret Thoughts and Desires of their Hearts in the best Forms of Words, which the most knowing pious Men of their own, or of former Ages had provided for them. As they had certain prescrib'd Prayers pronounc'd by the Priest for the solemn Oblation, so they had likewise occasional Devotions to be us'd, * while the Sacrifice was burning on the Altar. I am sensible the *Jews*, since they have been driven out of their own Country, and been deprived of their Temple, have advanc'd a notion, that

* 2 Mac. i. 23.--30. *Outram de Sacrif. Lib. 1. c. 22.*

Prayer,

Prayer and Praise, without material Sacrifice, is better than when join'd with it. But all considering Men must confess that this is an Effect of their judicial Blindness. Their Ancestors, when most degenerate, never sacrific'd without Prayer and Praise; and how these Prayers, and Praises could lose their value by means of the Sacrifice offer'd at the same time, it is very hard to conceive. Yet I fear some *Christians* have follow'd them in this monstrous opinion. They ought to have remembred that their Temple was * the *House of Prayer*, while it was the *House of Sacrifice*; and that while the Flesh, and other Materials of their Sacrifices were burning on the Altar, † *the people fell down to the earth, on their faces to the earth, to worship the Lord God Almighty, the most high; and that they besought the Lord most high by prayer, till the solemnity of the Lord was ended, and they had finished his service.*

Sect. 30. 2. But when Men worship God by Sacrifice, they do something more than pray to, and praise him, they *honour the Lord with their Substance*, which was thought a very considerable point of Religion by the Wise Man. This was the Temper of

* Compare 2 Chron. vii. 12.
1. 17. 19.

† Isa. lvi. 7 Eccl.

David, and of the old generous Worshipers of God, they scorned * *to offer to God of that which cost them nothing.* Some men seem to draw all their Schemes of Religion upon this Principle, or Foundation, that *Jesus Christ* came into the World to teach men a more frugal Religion than that contained in the Law of *Moses*, and to save his Disciples Charges. The contrary whereof is most certainly true. For our blessed Master hath expressly taught us, that *except our Righteousness exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, † we shall in no case enter into the kingdom of Heaven.* And it is certain, the Pharisees never stuck at any Cost which was necessary in order to fulfill the Letter of the Law. And *Righteousness* in the Language of the Scripture do's more particularly denote the Duty of Liberality, in contributing a good share of what we have to pious and charitable Uses. We cannot but know how great Countenance our Saviour gave to this Duty, when he approved of the poor Widow's || Generosity in giving all she had to the Treasury of the Temple. And this *Treasury* was for the building and repairing the House of God, and maintaining the Service there

* 2 Sam. xxiv. 24. † Matt. v. 20. || Mark xii. 43, 44.

perform'd, particularly the Morning, and Evening Sacrifice. And the Tribute paid by our Saviour, for himself, and his Apostle *Peter*, was for the same uses.

Sect. 31.

3. Nay, when men worship God by Sacrifice instituted and appointed by him, they do what is greatly beyond all this, they offer, or give to him what he by his revealed Will hath expressly demanded, and hath promised to accept. However weak, and unprofitable, the *Jewish* Sacrifices were in many respects, if compar'd with the Sacrifice of *Christ*; yet in one point they gave great comfort to all that offer'd them in cases exprest in their Law, and in a proper religious manner; I mean in this, that they might depend on God's acceptance of them for the purposes intended by them. It must be allow'd particularly, that they were happy in knowing how they might make atonement for such Sins, and Trespasses, as had particular Sacrifices assigned for them in their Law; and so had no reason to doubt of God's Pardon, when they had duly paid their Service at his Altar. How vile soever the Blood of Bulls and Goats was, yet it was by no means to be despised while God's Declaration stood in force, *viz.* that by this Blood, atonement was made for the Souls of Men. It could not but rejoice the

the true * *Israelite*, while he saw his own Sacrifice fuming on the Altar, to hear, or remember that it was *an Offering by Fire of a sweet savour unto the Lord*; and that he had an assurance of this Truth very often repeated to him in Scripture by God himself. And therefore whatever the Jews of the present Age may think of it, it was a fore Curse denounced by the Prophet *Hosea*, against their Fathers, namely, that † *the Bread for their Souls should not come into the House of the Lord*. The Bread, or Food, offer'd for their Souls was undoubtedly Sacrifice; the Prophet therefore lets them know, that they shou'd no longer enjoy the blessing of having Sacrifice offer'd for them in the Temple, because they shou'd all be carried Captives into Countries far distant, and the Temple it self should be burnt.

From what has been here said, we may see the Reason of the Priest's concluding the Sacrifice by pronouncing a Blessing on the People. That it was so we have clear Evidence, for || *Aaron lifted up his hands towards the People, and blessed them, and came down from offering the Sin-offering, and Burnt offering, and Peace-offerings*. This was the first time of *Aaron's* offering Sacrifice, and it was designed to be a

* Lev. xvii. 11.

† Hos. ix. 4.

|| Lev. ix. 22.

Pattern of his Ministration for the time to come. So, after the solemn Passover, and other magnificent Sacrifices of King *Hezekiah*, * *the Priests the Levites arose, and Blessed the People.* And that this was the settled Method, we may learn from *Ecclesiasticus's* Description of Sacrifice. For he tells us, *when the Solemnity of the Lord was ended, then went Aaron down, and lifted up his hands over the whole Congregation to give the Blessing of the Lord, † and they bowed themselves down to receive the Blessing of the Lord.* And the Reason of this is very evident, namely, that when that Service was perform'd, to which God had promis'd and annex'd his Favours and Mercies, the People had reason to expect God's gracious acceptance; and therefore the Priest was authoriz'd to pronounce the Divine Benediction upon them. *Melchisedeck* brought forth Bread, and Wine, and as a Priest of the Most High God blessed *Abraham*; that is, he offer'd the Bread, and Wine, as a Sacrifice to God, and *Abraham* by assisting in this Sacrifice qualify'd himself for God's Blessing, which he accordingly receiv'd from *Melchisedeck's* Lips. Therefore the Antients say, that he blessed *Abraham* in Bread and Wine. And thus the Priest's Office in

* 2 Chron. xxx. 27.

† Eccl. i. 19.--21.

bleſſing the People is founded in his Authority to offer Sacrifice.

VII. I am to conſider the Abuses that Men of old were guilty of in relation to Sacrifice.

I. The first of these was, that Men Sect. 33.
who were not commission'd to offer it, yet usurped this sacred Office. The first notable Example of this violation of the sacred Order was King * *Saul*. His Plea was Necessity: For he was under an apprehension lest the *Philistines* should fall upon him, before he had made Supplication to God by Sacrifice duly offer'd; therefore he presum'd to perform the Priest's Office with his own Hands: But he forfeited his Royal Dignity for thus invading the sacred Function. From him and *Uzziah* it appears, that Kings thought a thing worthy of their Ambition in those Ages, to offer Sacrifice and Incense. And God, by making them remarkable examples of his Displeasure, hath shewed us, that the highest worldly Dignity is not sufficient to protect Men, when they assume to themselves the Prerogative of Priests. As no King of *Israel* or *Juda*, were of *Aaron's* Family; so their Sacrifice and Incense had no atoning Virtue, and serv'd to no purpose, but their pre-

* 1 Sam. xiii. 11.--14.

sent Ruin, and their eternal Infamy. It is true *Samuel*, *Elias*, and other Prophets, did offer Sacrifice, though they were not Priests. Their singular Gifts, and Power of working Miracles, was as good a Commission to perform the Priests Office, as if they had been of *Aaron's Line*. And it is observable, that they did not offer their Sacrifices at the one proper Altar, but wherever they saw occasion. If any Person who had not an extraordinary privilege, and exemption from the Law of *Moses*, * had attempted to do either of these, present Death had been their Punishment.

Sect. 34.

2. Another Abuse committed in Sacrifice was the offering such Materials as God had expressly forbidden. Unhappy King *Saul* was a Transgressor in this point too; he spared the best Sheep, and Oxen, which he had taken from the *Amalekites*, and when *Samuel* reprimanded him for it, his excuse was that they were intended as a Sacrifice unto the Lord †. It is true, Sheep and Oxen were Creatures fit to be offer'd at God's Altar; but not the Sheep and Oxen of the *Amalekites*, because God had commanded that they should utterly be destroy'd. On this occasion *Samuel* declares, *to obey is better than sacrifice*.

* Lev. xvii. 9. Num. iii. 10.

† 1 Sam. xv. 9.

If *Saul* had brought allowed Animals to God's Altar, he had obey'd and sacrific'd both in one. But to kill such Creatures under pretence of doing honour to God, as he had expressly forbid, was rather Profanation, and Rebellion, than Sacrifice. But of all Abuses of holy Things none is so fatal as that which is committed by the Priests themselves. See what a severe charge God himself brings against those of the sacred Order, who had been guilty in this particular, * *Ye, O Priests, have despised my name, and ye say, wherein have we despised thy name? ye offer polluted food upon mine altar.* In the next verse we are told what is meant by *polluted food*, namely, offering the Blind, the Lame, and the Sick, that is, the vilest of their Cattle, the refuse of their Flocks, and Herds; whereas God had required the best of every thing in its kind to be reserved for Sacrifice. God farther reminds them, that they themselves did in effect confess the charge to be true; for they said, *the table of the Lord*, (that is the Altar) † *and the food on it was contemptible.* It is plain, God resented it as a gross Hypocrisy, as well as Profanation in the Priests, to cry out against the Sacrifices as base, and despicable, when they themselves had made them

* Mal. i. 6, 7.

† Ibid. 7. 12.

so by their connivance at the frugality of the People. Their good nature betray'd them into this Abuse: For the People were but just return'd from their Captivity, and had not yet recruited their Stocks, and Granaries; therefore the Priests indulged them in accepting such sordid Oblations at their Hands. Yet God did not more smartly reprehend the Rapine, and Debauchery of the Sons of *Eli*, than the Easiness, and Popularity of these other Priests, in permitting the People to offer Carrion, Bran, and Vinegar; instead of the fattest Calf, the finest Flour, and the strongest Wine, at his Altar.

Sect. 35. 3. Another gross Abuse of Sacrifice was this, that some Men of small Sense and small Judgment, observing how strictly Sacrifice was requir'd, and how universally and how assiduously practis'd in the *Jewish* Religion as well as in all others, from thence concluded that God received some Benefit to himself from the Flesh and Bread, and Wine consumed by the Fire on his Altar, or Table. The *Gentiles* did certainly believe that their Gods received an agreeable refreshment from the Steams, and Fumes of their Sacrifices, and it is probable that some of the grosser * *Jews* took these notions from them. God severely reprov'd these horrible In-

* Psalm l. 9.--13.

dignities,

dignities, and declar'd his resolution of abolishing all bloody Sacrifices, and (as it seems to me) the manner of consuming them in whole, or in part by Fire, on his Altar, in those elegant words, *I will take no bullock out of thine house, nor he-goat out of thy folds. For all the beasts of the forest are mine, and so are the cattle upon a thousand hills; I know all the fowls upon the mountains, and all the wild beasts of the field are in my sight. If I be hungry, I will not tell thee: For the whole world is mine, and all that is therein.* The meaning of these words cannot be, that bloody Sacrifice was forthwith abrogated, so soon as God by *Asaph* had said this; but that a time should hereafter come, when the *Messias* should appear in the World, and abrogate the Sacrifices of Bulls and Goats, and should take away all occasions of saying that God required Sacrifice to satisfy his own Hunger.

4. Another great Abuse of Sacrifice was, Sect. 36. that Men presumed to offer it while they were under habits of Sin, and the guilt of gross Vices; as if they hoped to bribe God into a favourable opinion of their Villanies. The words of *Isaiab* are most observable on this Head; * *To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices to*

* Isa. i. 11.

me? saith the Lord. I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats; the 12th and 15th verses explain all that is here said, who hath required this at your hands to tread my courts? your hands are full of blood: As if he had said, "Who ever demanded it as a Duty " of such vile Wretches as you are, to " trample on Holy Ground, or to approach mine Altar? You are a Crew of " Blood-thirsty Men, and Murderers in " your Intention at least, if you have " not also committed the inhuman Fact." As God could never delight, or take any real pleasure in seeing the Blood of his Creatures shed at the Altar; so the evil Intentions, and Dispositions of them that shed it, render'd these Offerings loathsome in his Sight. And you may observe, that God declares himself displeased with their * *Sabbaths, and calling of Assemblies*, as well as with their other Services. Nay, he declares against their Prayers as well as their Sacrifices: For, saith he, † *when you spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not bear.* The same Prophet declares of the same sort of Men, *He that killeth an*

* Isa. i. 13.

† ver. 15.

ox,* is as if he slew a man : he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck. And the Reason of it is declared in the same verse, *They have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.* God says † by his Prophet Amos, *I hate, I despise your feasts, I will not smell, or accept the fume of your Sacrifices, in your solemn assemblies. Tho' ye offer me burnt-offerings and meal-offerings, I will not accept them.* The Reason of all this is sufficiently express'd in the same chapter ||; for the People to whom he speaks had turn'd judgment into wormwood, and left off righteousness; they hated him that rebuked in the gate, and they abhor'd him that spake uprightly; they trod upon the poor, they afflicted the just, they took bribes, their transgressions were manifold, and their sins mighty. There can be no doubt but by the first Laws of Sacrifice given by God to Adam, and from him deliver'd to the Patriarchs, penitent Hearts, and pious Dispositions, were required in all that undertook to offer Sacrifice. But because the Law of Moses did expressly require no other Preparation for coming to the Altar but what was merely external, from hence the perverse Jews took occasion to neglect the inward, and more necessary Preparation of the Heart and Mind ;

*sa. lxxvi. 3. † Amos v. 21. || ver. 7. 10, 11, 12.

notwithstanding what their own Wise-man had taught them, viz. that *the sacrifice of the wicked is abomination to the Lord.*

Sect. 37.

5. The last Abuse of Sacrifice which I shall mention is of the same sort with the former, and I mean that too many Men laid a greater Stress on Sacrifice than on moral Duty, or the Love of God and Man. The Love of God is, and ever was the first Commandment, the Love of Man is the Second, and the Law of Sacrifice is a third, (if we consider it of itself, as abstracted from the Love of God) and by the use of this third, God intended to draw Men to the Practice of the other two: So he who fulfills the Law of Sacrifice, does at the same time fulfill the other two great Laws of Religion. All Duty is imperfect while we do wilfully separate one part from the other. He who offers Sacrifice with a Heart destitute of Love to God and Man, must of necessity be guilty of a very gross and sinful Omission; because his want of this Love must proceed from his own Will and Choice. He who neglects Sacrifice out of pretence that he loves God, and his Neighbour, and therefore shall be accepted without Sacrifice, he is guilty of breaking this third Law; and therefore shews that the Love of God is not in him. For God accepts none as true Friends but
such

such as keep all his Commandments. But, if his Love to God and Man be sincere, and he omits Sacrifice, not out of choice, but for want of opportunity, or of the outward means; in this Case the Man shall be accepted without Sacrifice, because it was not in his power to offer it. But Sacrifice can never be accepted from a Man that wants the Love of God and his Neighbour. And further, when through some outward hinderances it so happens, that we must either omit Sacrifice, or an Act of Charity to Man, it is agreed on all Hands, that Charity takes place of Sacrifice, that is, God in this Case esteems our Charity to Man a better proof of Love to him, than the immediate worship of himself either by Sacrifice, or by mere Prayer, and Praise. Not that an act of Charity to Man is in itself better than thanking and worshipping God, but because the Charity must be perform'd now, or not at all; whereas the Worship of God may be perform'd at another time as well as now. For if both can go together, they ought not to be put asunder: But when it is impossible to attend at the same time a dying or sick Friend, and the Worship of God, then it is evident, * *God will have Mercy, and not Sacrifice; or, rather than Sacrifice.* For so I think

* Hosea vi. 6.

all do, and must understand that Text. And in this Sense *Solomon* also must be understood, when he says, * *To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to God than sacrifice*; that is, when Sacrifice is offer'd without a disposition to Justice, and Judgment. Our Saviour thought the Scribe *answer'd discreetly*, when he said, that † *to love God with all the heart, and ones neighbour as himself, is better than all whole burnt-offerings, and sacrifices*, without this Love to God and Man. In a word, Sacrifice duly offer'd, implies Love to God and Man; and is indeed an effect of Love to God, who has commanded us to offer it. But the *Jews* separated Sacrifice from those two Commandments in Fact, if not in Principle, and hoped to make amends for the neglect of those two great Commandments, by causing the Altar perpetually to smoke with plenty of Sacrifices, and then no wonder that they were condemn'd as notoriously defective in their Duty: this was a most abominable Abuse of Sacrifice.

Sect. 38.

VIII. Lastly, I am to shew what Sacrifice is abolished, what not. And from what was said under the former Head, it is evident that none of those Texts there produc'd did actually forbid Sacrifice:

* Prov. xxi. 3.

† Mark xii. 33.

and

and but one of them (that is *Pf. l. ver. 9.*) did foretell that in the times of the *Messias*, God would no longer accept of *Bullocks*, and *Goats*, or other *Animals* in *Sacrifice*. It is certain this way of *Worship* stood in full force so long as our *Saviour* lived. He frequented the *Temple-Service*, and kept the *Passover*, and commanded the *Leper*, when he was cleans'd, to offer the gift of *Sacrifice* which *Moses* requir'd; this Gift was *two Birds*, and on the eighth Day *two he-lambs*, and *one ewe-lamb*. The *Prophets*, or rather *God* by them, in those *Texts* complained of the *Abuses* committed in relation to *Sacrifice*, but did not blame, or however did not abolish the *Thing* it self.

For the same Reason *Sacrifice* was not set aside by those Words of *David* to *God*, † *thou desirest no sacrifice, else would I give it thee; but thou delightest not in burnt-offerings*. *David* cannot be rationally understood to mean, that *God* absolutely refused to be worshiped by *Sacrifice*. For then he need never have used it himself, as yet we are sure he did: Nay, in this very *Psal*m he expresses his Expectation of a time yet to come, when *God* would be pleased with *burnt-offerings*, and *oblations*, &c. and he expres-

Sect. 39.

* *Matt. viii.*

Levit. xiv. 4. 10.

† *Psal. li. 16.*

seth his Will, and Intention, that they should be * *sacrifices of righteousness*, that is, generous, magnificent Sacrifices, offer'd in all Respects according to God's Will. Nay, he farther intimates the time when this was to be, *viz.* when God became † *favourable to Zion*; that is, when *Zion* by a Sign from Heaven shall be chose for the Place of God's Worship. Accordingly when *David* at the Direction of the Prophet had offer'd Sacrifice in the Threshing-floor of *Araunah*, and God had answer'd him by sending Fire from Heaven to consume it, || *David* soon came to this Resolution, *This is the house of God, this is the altar of burnt-offering.* *David* had offer'd Sacrifice on *Zion* when he first brought the Ark thither, and probably expected that God should then shew his Will, and Pleasure that this should be the Seat of Divine Worship. Soon after his Coronation to the entire Kingdom of *Israel* he expresth his hope that God would *come to him*; that is, that he would choose *Zion*, where his own Royal Castle stood, for the Place of Worship. But God was not yet pleased to signify his Will and Pleasure in this Point; which made *David* to be in Suspence, and for that reason he forbore to

* Psal. li. 19. † Verse 18. || 1 Chr. xxi. 28.
xxii. 1. 1 Sam. vi. 18. Psalm ci. 2.

offer Sacrifice, not only on occasion of the Victories he obtained, but even when he saw the People die of the Pestilence, and the Angel stretching forth his Hand over *Jerusalem*: He seemed still to have no thoughts of sacrificing till *Gad* the Prophet charg'd him to do it. For he was still under an opinion that God *desired no Sacrifice*: for that, if he had desired it, he would by some visible Token have distinguish'd the Place where it was to be offer'd. But when God had been thus favourable to *Zion*, by sending the Fire from Heaven to shew the acceptance of his Sacrifice, * for the future, we are told, *he sacrificed there*. As soon therefore as *David* understood that God desired, or would be pleased with Sacrifice offer'd at *Zion*, he from that time forward continued to worship him in that Manner. In the mean time, while he knew not where to offer material Sacrifice, he declares the only Sacrifice he could pay to God was *a troubled Spirit, a broken, and contrite Heart*.

As it hath been already observed that Sect. 40. the 50th Psalm contains a Prophecy of the *Messias*, and of his putting an end to bloody Sacrifices, and to all offerings burnt on an Altar; so the Apostle in my Text will not permit us to doubt that the 40th

* 1 Chr. xxi. 28.

Psalm contains a Prophecy of the same sort, when *David* there said, *Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, in burnt-offerings, * and sacrifice for Sin thou hast no pleasure*, he spake in the person of the Son of God. And we are expressly told by the † Apostle what Sacrifices are meant, and intended to be abolish'd, namely, *such as were offer'd by the Law*. Therefore whatever Sacrifices took their beginning from *Moses*, are here expressly set aside, annulled, and cancel'd. When God by *Moses* gave new Laws of Sacrifice, he revoked the old Laws of Sacrifice used by the Patriarchs. For he declared against all Sacrifice, but what was offer'd according to the directions contained in the Books of *Moses*. Therefore now the old Law of Sacrifice used by the Patriarchs, and those which were enjoined to the *Israelites*, are both of them out-dated, and set aside.

Sect. 41. But they argue too hastily who from this, or any other Text conclude, that all Sacrifice is to cease under the Gospel. The contrary does sufficiently appear from my Text. For the Apostle having spoken of the Sacrifice of the Law, and of *the Will of God, or the Thing which God chose, or accepted*, by which he plainly means *Christ's prepared Body*, it presently fol-

* Ps. xl. 8. 9

† Heb. x. 8. 9

lows, *He*, (that is, *Jesus Christ*) *taketb away the first*, that is, the Sacrifice of the Law, *that he may establisb the second*, that is, the *prepared Body*, the thing chosen, or accepted by God. And by *establisbing* of it, 'tis most reasonable to understand the ordaining of the use of it to all future Generations. And no *Christian* can doubt but the Body of *Christ* is a true, proper Sacrifice. And I must farther observe, that * the *prepared Body* of *Christ*, in this place mention'd, does, according to the propriety of the Original, imply a Body fit to be eaten, and therefore the Apostle must mean the Sacramental Body of *Christ*. So again, in the 23^d verse, the Apostle admonishes Christians *to hold fast the Free will-offering of their Faith*, (see Sect. 22.) or *the Thank-offering of their Faith*, and this certainly implies a Material Sacrifice. And the Communion was ever so thought by the whole Church of *Christ*, till now of late Years. As the Cattle kill'd at the Altar that had Trumpets blow'd over them, was call'd by the Psalmist, *a Sacrifice of shouting* † so the Com-

* The Hebrew Word כָּרִית signifies to prepare, but only for a Feast, or Banquet: So it clearly signifies 2 Sam. iii. 35. 2 Kings iv. 23. Job xl. 25. alias xli. 6. The Apostle here renders it prepare, and therefore must mean prepare for a religious Feast, first to be offer'd to God, then to be eaten.

† Compare Num. x. 10. with Ps. xxvii. 6.

munion of the Body, and Blood of *Christ* may be justly call'd an Offering, or Sacrifice of Faith, because none are fit to be present at it but such as are true Believers. When in the 50th Psalm God had foretold a time when he would no longer accept Bulls, or Goats in Sacrifice, yet he does in the same Psalm very plainly declare his intention, that men shou'd still offer to him a *Sacrifice of Thanks, or Praise*,* and says, that he *who offers this Sacrifice honours him*. It is therefore plain, that tho' all other Sacrifice be taken away ; yet this of Thanks and Praise still remains. And the *Eucharist* is this Sacrifice, and is therefore called the *Eucharist*, because the principal design of it is to praise, and glorify God for the great Work of our Redemption in *Christ Jesus*. Thank-offerings, and Vows were always some Living-Creatures, or Material Things, offer'd by way of acknowledgement to God, for singular Mercies received from him. (See Sect. 20) They do but deceive themselves who fancy that this Sacrifice consists only of Words and Thoughts. † When the Apostle speaking of this Sacrifice mentions the *Fruits of our Lips*, he means such Alms, and Oblations as pious men had solemnly vowed, or promised to God, when they were under any Calamity, and which

* Ps. l. 14. 23.

† Heb. xiii. 15.

they offer'd to God at the Altar, or Communion Table, when it pleased God to perfect their Deliverance. Such *Alms and Offerings* St. Paul brought from the Churches of the *Gentiles* to those of his own * Nation, that is, to the *Christians* of *Jerusalem*, and *Judea*: And by these *Alms* and *Oblations* they made real Confessions of Gratitude to God for his Bounty toward them. When our Saviour speaks of his Disciple as bringing his *Gift* to the Altar, he plainly hints his Will, that there should be an *Altar* in his Church, and that *Christians* shou'd there offer their *Gifts*. And tho' a Sacrifice may be offer'd without an Altar; yet an Altar supposes a Sacrifice to be offer'd on it. The *Primitive Christians* used to bring *Oblations*, not only of Bread, and Wine, but of whatever was necessary to maintain divine Service. Out of the Bread and Wine so much was taken as was necessary for the Communion, and this was most solemnly offer'd to God as a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving for the Redemption of Mankind, and was afterwards distributed to the Faithful. The remainder of the offerings of all sorts were applied for the Maintenance of the Bishop, the Clergy, and the Poor, and as a Fund for Hospitality, and for supplying the necessities of other Churches. The Apostle

* Act. xxiv. 17.

speaking of this matter says, * *we have an Altar, whereof they have no right to eat who serve the Tabernacle.* By them who serve the Tabernacle, he plainly means the Jewish Priests, and they being unbelievers had indeed no right to partake of the Sacrifice offer'd on the *Christian Altar*; neither of the Sacramental Body and Blood of *Christ*, nor of the other Offerings there presented by the People of the *Christian Church*. Some, I am sensible, would turn this into a Figure, and by an Altar whereof *Christians* had a right to eat, and, whereof the Jewish Priests had no right to eat, would understand *Christ* himself, and by Eating suppose the Apostle meant Believing. But then it will follow that what the Apostle says, is this, that Jewish Priests had no right to believe in *Christ*. And tho' this be a very odd way of speaking; yet certainly, if any Men on Earth might be said to have a right to believe in *Christ*, the *Jews* were they. Both the Priests and People of that Nation had *Christ* and his Gospel first proposed to them; and if they had no right to believe in him, then it must follow that no People had this Right. This therefore cannot possibly be the Apostle's Meaning. And the Church of *Christ* having in all Ages, the best as well as the worst, be-

* Heb. xiii. 10.

lieved,

lieved, that the *Eucharist* was a proper *Sacrifice*, and the *Communion Table* a proper *Altar*, there can be no reason to suppose that St. Paul means any other Altar but the *Communion Table*; from which all *Christ's* faithful People have a Right to be fed, and from which the *Jewish* People, and even the Priests themselves, who used to live so richly on the Offerings made at their Altar, have no pretence to receive the least Crumb of the Bread of God, the least Drop of the Drink-offering of the Lord. But I shall in my next Discourse speak more largely of our *Christian Sacrifice*.

The End of the first Discourse.

T H E

Primitive Communicant.

D I S C O U R S E II.

L U K E xxii. 19, 20.

And he took Bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my Body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the Cup after supper, saying, This Cup is the New Testament in my Blood, which is shed for you.

IT might not seem unseasonable that I should here explain the full meaning of the Word here rendered, by our Translators, *gave thanks*; but this will better fall in with my Design in the *third Discourse*. The only particulars which I shall at present observe in these Words are,

I. That *Christ* at his instituting the Communion did offer the Sacrifice of our Redemption.

II. How

II. How far he did at the same time command his Apostles to perpetuate this Sacrifice. *Do this in remembrance of me.*

I. *Christ* at his instituting the Communion did offer the Sacrifice of our Redemption.

It was fore-ordain'd of God that *Christ* Sect. 1. should redeem Mankind by offering Himself, or his Body, and Blood. It was for this Purpose that He was constituted a Priest according to the Order of *Melchisedeck*, that he might make an Offering for Sin, and bear away our Iniquities. *In the volume of the Book*, in the Scriptures of *Moses*, and the Prophets, * *it was written of him, that he should do the will of God, or offer the thing which God chose, and accepted, the body which he had prepared.*

And we are sufficiently assured by the Sect. 2. Writers of the New Testament that he did this in the Fullness of Time. St. Paul affirms † that *he gave or offer'd himself to God for us, that he became a Sin-offering, that he offer'd himself to God without spot for us, that he appear'd to take away sin by the sacrifice of himself, that he gave or offer'd himself to God for us, as an offering of a sweet smelling savour.* Not only the Sa-

* Heb. x. 7. † Gal. i. 4. 2 Cor. v. 21.
Heb. ix. 14.--26. Eph. v. 2.

crifices of *Noah*, but all that were duly offer'd according to the Law of *Moses*, are distinguish'd by this Character, that they were *offerings of a sweet smelling savour*: and it is for this reason that the Sacrifice of our Redemption is spoke of in the same manner, to let us know that it was a true and proper Sacrifice. And accordingly the Church of *Christ* in all Ages hath ever believed it so to be.

Sect. 3. When the Holy Writers affirm *Christ* to have been ordain'd by God to be a real Sacrifice, and to have been actually offer'd as such, it is vain to object against this Truth, that *Christ* was never laid in Whole, or in Part, on any Altar; that his Flesh was not cut, and broiled; that his Blood was not sprinkled by any Priest, nor carried into the Holy of Holies in the Temple at *Jerusalem*; or that neither the *Levitical*, nor any other Rites, and Forms of Sacrifices, were exactly observ'd in the Oblation which he made. The solemn offering himself to God while he was yet alive, his being soon after slain, as an Offering for Sin, and his Entrance into the heavenly Holy of Holies with his own Blood after his Resurrection, are sufficient to prove him both a Priest, and Sacrifice. And I have clearly proved, that none of those other Rites now hinted, were in themselves so necessary, but that

that a true Sacrifice might be offer'd without the use of any of them. (See *Discourse I. Sect. 11, 12, 13.*) Nay, Christ's offering himself in the manner he did, and his Death following upon it, had been sufficient to render him a true Priest, and Sacrifice, though he had not proceeded to enter into the Holy of Holies, as appears from *Sect. 13.* of the first *Discourse*. As it was absolutely in the Nature of Things impossible that our Saviour could as a Priest offer his own Body and Blood, in the manner just now describ'd; so, if he could have done it, yet the cutting in pieces, and broiling his own Flesh, and sprinkling his own Blood on God's Altar, was so inhuman and barbarous, that the very Thoughts of it are sufficient to raise Horrour in the Minds of all that are not extremely hardened. Living Creatures could not, generally speaking, be offer'd without being slain; yet the Scape-goat was a perfect Sacrifice without losing its Life. And when the Sacrifice must be killed; yet it was not necessary that the Priest should kill it, except in some special Cases. (See *Discourse I. Sect. 10.*) And if it had, Christ could never have been both Priest, and Sacrifice, as he was. For it was impossible that the Holy Jesus could ever commit so unnatural an Action, as to lay

violent Hands on his own Person. I am sensible, some make killing a Sacrifice, and offering it, to be the same Thing; but even when the Priest did kill the Sacrifice; yet the offering of it, and the making the Atonement are never imputed to the Act of killing, but to what was done before, or after it. See *Discourse I. Sect. 11.*

Sect. 4. Our Saviour in my Text plainly enough tells us, when it was that he gave or offer'd himself for us, namely, when he took the Bread, and brake it. For he does not more plainly say of the Bread, *it is my Body*, than he at the same time says, *it is my Body, given or offer'd to God for you.* All Sacrifices of living Creatures were ever offer'd to God before they were slain; and this was a standing Rule both among the * *Jews*, and *Gentiles.* (See *Discourse I. Sect. 15.*) Two Apostles assure us, that *Isaac* was offer'd as a Sacrifice, yet he lived above 150 Years after this, and at last dyed a natural Death. *Christ* was slain within a few Hours after he was offer'd. But it was necessary, his Body should be offer'd while he was yet alive. For it is evident, this was an establish'd Law of Sacrifice.

* Heb. xi. 17. Ja. ii. 21.

The Prayer of *Christ Jesus* contained in the xviith Chapter of *St. John's* Gospel, must have been pronounced at the time of his instituting the Communion. For as soon as it was ended, he passed over the Brook *Kedron*, and entered the Garden, and presently after was seiz'd by the Band of Soldiers. Now in this Prayer he says to God, *I sanctify*, or rather *consecrate my self* †. He could no otherwise consecrate himself but by entring, as Man, on the Exercise of his Priestly Office; and the first Act of his Human Priesthood was the offering his Body as a Sacrifice: nor was it necessary that he who was solemnly pronounc'd, and sworn to be a Priest by God, should be otherwise inaugurated in his Office. This therefore was what he now did; and so several of the most judicious antient as well as modern Writers do understand these Words. And I am persuaded, they will not admit of any other meaning. In this same Prayer, our Saviour declares to God the Father, *|| I have finished the work, which thou gavest me to do.* I conceive he could not have said this, if the greatest Work which he had to do in this World had been yet undone. And no one, I think, can doubt but the offering himself as a

* John xviii. 1. † John xvii. 19. || ib. ver. 4.

Sacrifice for the Sins of the World, was beyond compare, the greatest work that he was to accomplish here on Earth. He had therefore done this, when he instituted the Communion, when he gave his Body to God, and shed his Blood for Men. He did not indeed say * *it is finished*, till he had been crucify'd, and was just giving up the Ghost. His Murderers had not perform'd their part till he was actually slain; Satisfaction for the Sins of Men could not be made but by his Death. Yet *Christ* had done his part when he had, as a Priest, given his Body and Blood for us to God in the Communion. *Christ* was not an Agent in his own Death. God forbid, any Man should entertain so unworthy a Thought of him. He had finished his Work some Hours before he was nailed to the Cross. His Death was the Work of his Enemies, in which he was a Sufferer only.

Sect. 6.

Whatever is most excellent and extraordinary, must for that reason differ in some respects from all other of the same kind. Such was the Sacrifice of *Christ*, which therefore cannot in all particulars agree with other Sacrifices. This for Instance was very singular, that the Priest and Sacrifice were to be the same; that *Christ* was to offer himself, or his own Body, and

* John xix. 30.

Blood. For in the common course the Giver of the Gift, the Priest, and Sacrifice, are perfectly distinct from each other. Therefore our blessed Lord, that he might render his Sacrifice more agreeable to the stated Rules, did resolve to depute outward Symbols, and to offer them to God the Father, as Earnests and Pledges of his own Body and Blood. The Church of *Rome* will not indeed allow of this Distinction, but asserts the Symbols to have been the very Body, and Blood of *Christ*, and thereby are driven to the Absurdity of forcing Men to deny their Senses; and so still make the Giver and the Gift, the Priest and Sacrifice, to have been perfectly the same, not only in Mystery but in real Substance. But he who considers the true meaning and Intention of our Saviour, in deputing outward Signs for the Materials of his Sacrifice, will see that Transubstantiation is contrary not only to Sense and Reason, but to the Design of our Saviour in this holy Institution.

Farther, our Saviour's Sacrifice was his Body, and Blood, separate from each other. When his natural Body, and Blood, were actually separate from each other, he must of necessity be dead, and therefore incapable of offering Sacrifice. And since therefore his Body, and Blood, were to be offer'd distinctly and apart, there was a necessity

Sect. 7.

necessity of his doing it by outward Signs and Symbols, or not doing it at all. Whatever was done by our Saviour as a Priest here on Earth must have been concluded before his Death: for while his natural Body, and Blood, were separate from each other, he could not act as a Man, or as a Human Priest: Therefore tho' the *Levitical* Priests made Atonement with the Blood of their Sacrifices, while they lay slain at the Altar; yet it was impossible for our Saviour to render his Sacrifice agreeable to theirs in this respect: Therefore he did all this by Representation while he was yet alive. It has been shew'd, (in *Discourse I. Sect. 15.*) that all Sacrifices of living Creatures were offer'd while they were yet alive, either by the Owner, or by the Priest; and all Purgative Sacrifices (and such was our Saviour's) by the High Priest. Our Saviour, as being both Owner, and Priest, made the Oblation while he was yet alive. And because it was impossible for him to make the Priestly Atonement, as was the common course, while the Sacrifice was dead, therefore he did both in one. For he offer'd the Bread, and Wine, as his Body and Blood, apart from each other; and so did that by representation, which could not be done by him in real Substance.

Christ

Christ, long before his Death, had sufficiently declared his Intention, that his Flesh and Blood offer'd in Sacrifice should become a Religious Feast for them that believed in him. This he did in the sixth chapter of *St. John*, and I shall speak at large of this point in the next *Discourse*. Now since he intended that his Sacrifice should afford Materials for a Feast; it was absolutely necessary that he should depute some Creatures or other, that were capable of being eaten, and drank, to represent his Body; and Blood. For to eat real human Flesh, and to drink human Gore is so barbarous, and unnatural, that it was an Indignity to our Saviour to suppose that he design'd to treat his Disciples in so brutish a manner. And when *Christ* says, *a Body hast thou, O God, prepared me*, the most proper meaning of these Words is, 'Thou, O Heavenly Father, hast assign'd such a Substance for a representative of my natural Body to be offer'd to thee, as is fit to be made a Feast for such as believe on me.' See *Discourse I. Sect. 41.*

Sect. 8.

And since it was necessary that *Christ* should offer his Sacrifice by Symbols, in Substance and Nature distinct from his Body and Blood, no Materials could be more proper than Bread, and Wine, for this purpose. * *Melchisedeck's* Sacrifice was

Sect. 9.

* Gen. xiv. 18.

of this sort, and our Saviour was a Priest of his Order. A Meal-offering was the Sacrifice of *Aaron* on the Day in which he was anointed, (See *Disc. I. Sect. 9.*) and therefore it best fitted the High-Priest of our Profession, at that Time when he consecrated himself by entering on the Exercise of his Priestly Office. The Meal-offering of the *Levitical* Law, which was a Type of that offer'd by our Saviour was called, and esteemed *most Holy*, and therefore best became the most Holy *Jesus* : The Drink-offering of the *Jews* was so sacred, that neither People nor Priests were permitted to share in it, but God reserved it wholly to be poured out at the Altar ; and was therefore a fit Type of the Blood of *Jesus Christ*, the Lamb of God ; whose Blood was most precious in his Sight. See *Discourse I. Sect. 24.*

Sect. 10. It is true, the Flesh and Blood of any Animal might more nearly resemble the Flesh and Blood of *Christ*, than any other Material could do it. And if *Christ* had designed the holy Sacrament to be barely a Type of his Body crucified, of his Blood shed as a Sacrifice for the Sins of Men, he might have continued the use of the Paschal Lamb, instead of ordaining a new Type of Bread and Wine. In this respect, I mean in natural Resemblance, every

every living Creature killed at God's Altar, was a more fit Type of *Christ's* Body, and Blood, than those Symbols which he chose. But our Saviour design'd his Sacrifice to be such as might be discern'd by the Understanding, or Spirit of Man, rather than by his outward Senses. And his Design was also to abolish all bloody Sacrifices; and therefore he chose to offer the Sacrifice of his own Body, and Blood, in Materials that were without Blood. He design'd his Sacrament to be not only a Type, but somewhat more; to be his very Body, and Blood, in Mystery though not in Substance; not to the outward Eye, but to the inward Man; not in Colour and Appearance, but in Life and Efficacy. Further, I take it for certain, that *Christ* by his Divine Omniscience foresaw, that *Christians* in after Ages, under pretence of believing his Words in the highest and most perfect Sense, would undertake to persuade themselves, and others, that the Signs and Symbols were his natural Flesh and Blood. And it well became him upon this account, to choose such Materials as were sufficiently unlike to true Flesh and Blood, that so none who did not deny their own Senses, might be led into so gross an Error. If Bread, and Wine, are by so many *Christians* believed to be the very substantial

stantial Body and Blood of *Christ*; how much more easy had it been for such Men to believe the same of the real Flesh, and Blood of any Animals? Our Saviour therefore took a proper care to prevent such Misapprehensions of his meaning.

Sect. 11. It was not at all singular that an offering of Meal, and Wine, was joined to the offering of the natural Body, and Blood of *Christ*: for it was the common practice in the Tabernacle, and Temple. (See *Discourse I. Sect. 8.*) And so it was among the *Gentiles* too. What was singular in this respect was, that by offering the Bread, and pouring out the Wine, *Christ* did in his own intention offer his Body, and shed his Blood before God. This is clearly implied in *Christ's* Words, *This is my body given [to God] or broken* (as *St. Paul* expresses it) *for you.* * And, *this Cup, or Wine poured out for you, is the new covenant in my blood.* (This is the true literal Translation of the latter Verse of my Text.) It could not be said of the natural Body, or Blood of *Christ*, as distinguished from the Bread, and Wine, that they were either *broken*, or poured out, while he himself was yet alive, and his Blood running in his Veins: But in breaking, and offering the Bread, he did in his own intention present his

* 1 Cor. xi. 24.

crucify'd Body to God the Father, and likewise in pouring out the Wine he offer'd, or resigned his own Blood, to be shed for the Sins of Men. And though *Christ's* Body was in natural Substance a distinct Thing from the Bread, as his Blood was from the Wine; yet in Mystery they were the same; so that in offering the outward Symbols, he did at the same time offer the Things themselves. And as the Symbols could not add to the inestimable value of the natural Body, and Blood; so neither could they at all impair, or lessen it.

If it be ask'd, with what Rites, or in what manner *Christ* offer'd this Sacrifice? I answer, we have no intimation of any other outward Rites used by *Christ* in this Ordinance, but taking into his Hands first the Bread, then the Cup; and his so taking them implies his setting them apart to represent his Body, and Blood, which was the use for which he intended them. At the time that he brake the Bread he did also give, or offer it to God. This we may learn by comparing the Words of St. *Luke* * with those of St. *Paul*. For whereas the one hath it, *This is my body given for you*, the other says, *This is my body broken for you*. As the Sense of both must have been the

Sect. 12.

* Luke xxii. 19. 1 Cor. xi. 24.

same;

same; so it follows, that *Christ's* breaking and offering the Bread was as it were the same Action, or however, two Actions perform'd for the same purpose, and at the same Instant of Time: And for the same reason, the pouring out of the Wine, and the offering of his Blood, may be called either one Action, or two several Actions done in the same moment.

Sect. 13. It has been proved in *Discourse I. Sect. 14.* that all Sacrifice was ever offer'd by Prayer, or by a direct Address to God. And we are not therefore to doubt but that our Saviour perform'd the solemn Oblation of his Body, and Blood, in the same manner. The Apostle says, * *he offer'd himself to God by the eternal Spirit.* It is not easy to conceive how the Holy Spirit should concur with *Christ* in this great Action, by any other means but by raising his human Devotion to the greatest height, while he was performing the most momentous Action that he ever did here on Earth, and by infusing a secret Joy into his Mind, while his Soul was making this Offering for Sin. Our Blessed Lord commonly chose to express himself on all occasions in the Words of the antient Prophets, when they served his present Purpose. And there is no Text in the whole Bible which better

* Heb. ix. 14.

fitted our Saviour's present Case, (and which the Apostle seems to mention as the Speech of *Christ Jesus* himself) than that of the Psalmist; "** Sacrifice, and Offering, and Burnt-offering, and Offering for Sin, (meaning such as were offer'd by the Law) thou wouldst not, neither hast Pleasure therein. But a Body hast thou prepared me. Lo! I come, O Lord, to do thy Will, or to offer the chosen, or accepted Thing.*" It is not possible with any certainty to affirm, that *Christ* pronounced these, or such like Words, with an audible Voice. It is sufficient that he did it, at least, with such outward circumstances of Devotion as best agreed with the most solemn, and momentous Action that was ever done on Earth, and in such a manner that his Apostles might know what he was doing, and be able to attest it. When the Evangelists tell us, that he gave Thanks, and blessed, they do sufficiently declare, that he did on this occasion directly address himself to God. And sure no rational thinking Man can believe, that the devout *Jesus* would speak to God the Father, sitting, or leaning on a Couch, (as the practice then was) or in what is called a Table-posture. He who upon other occasions kneeled in his † Prayer to God,

* Ps. xl. 6, 7. Heb. x. 6, 7.

† Mat. xxvi. 39.

may, prostrated himself by falling down on his Face, would never make the most important Address that ever was made to the Divine Majesty, in any posture that did not express Reverence and Devotion.

Sect. 14.

As it was in it self necessary that the Sacrifice of *Christ's* Body, and Blood, should have been offer'd by him while he was yet alive; so it was highly proper (to say the least,) that it should be done while he had his Apostles with him. Holy Men of old chose to offer their Sacrifices in select Companies of such as were most like themselves. When *David* was to perform his Vows, that is, to offer such Sacrifices, as he had before promised to God, he * declares, he would do it *in the presence of God's people, or in the sight of them that feared God.* And certainly the Apostles were the most proper Body of Men that our Saviour could choose to be with him, when as a Priest he was to offer the great Sacrifice. They were Witnesses chosen before of God to attest his most remarkable Actions, as well as to be the Stewards of his Mysteries. It is therefore unreasonable to suppose that he would perform the most remarkable Action of all in their absence. But he knew full well that the

* Psa. cxvi. 14. xxii. 25.

Apostles

Apostles would forsake him before he was crucify'd; and that none of them but St. *John*, would stand so near him as to be Witnesses of what he said while he was hanging on the Cross. And certainly that Multitude of bloody *Jews*, with the *Roman* Soldiers, who surrounded our Saviour, during the time of his Crucifixion, were the most disagreeable Assembly that could have been drawn together in any part of the World, to be Witnesses of the most sacred Priestly Oblation of the Son of God for the Redemption of Men. Therefore our Saviour chose to do this while he had the Apostles, his proper Ministers, about him; and while their Minds were in a proper devout Frame immediately after the Celebration of the most solemn Ordinance of the *Jewish* People, I mean the Sacrifice, and Feast of the Passover. It will farther appear, presently, to have been absolutely necessary, that this Sacrifice should be offer'd in the presence of the Apostles on another account; namely, because they themselves were by this Sacrifice to be consecrated *Christian Priests*. (See *Seet. 18. of this Discourse*.) It will be sufficient at present to observe, that not only the Apostles were, by this personal Sacrifice of *Christ*, ordained to their Office, and their Succession established, but

the *Christian* People, or Laity, were also for ever qualify'd to bear their Part in the Worship of God. This was done by Virtue of that Prayer of *Christ*, *Neither pray I for these* [the Apostles] *alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word, that they all may be one,** &c. The design of this Prayer evidently was this, that all faithful People living in Unity with the Apostles, and their Successors, might for ever be esteem'd as one Body of Men associated together for Divine Worship, in covenant with God and one another, and whose Devotions should therefore be acceptable to the Divine Majesty. And it was necessary that the Apostles should have been present, when *Christ* put up this important Petition in behalf of his Church, that they might attest it to all future Generations. The Prayer of *Christ* was as effectual and prevalent with God, as if the whole number of them who believed in *Christ* had been Eye, and Ear-witnesses of it. And the Apostles, not the private Believers, were entrusted with the publication of it.

Sect. 15. Our Saviour might think it most reasonable to enter on the Exercise of his Priestly Function, by offering the Sacrifice of his Body and Blood, while he

* John xix. 20, 21.

was even in the Eye of Man entirely free from all outward Force, before he was apprehended, or under any Confinement, that he might take from his Enemies all occasion of saying, that he offer'd himself as a Sacrifice for Men, only to avoid the Reproach of a scandalous Death. Therefore he chose to do this before he was their Prisoner. And it was a great addition to the Merits of his Sacrifice, that it was offer'd with a perfect Willingness of Mind. The Cup which *Christ* pray'd to have removed from him, was not the violent Death which he was to undergo, and to which he had absolutely resign'd himself; but that violent Agony, which he then felt within him, and from this he was deliver'd. * For there appeared to him and Angel from Heaven to comfort him.

Enough hath been said to shew, that *Christ*, according to the Law of Sacrifice, was to be offer'd before he was slain, and that he was so offer'd, and could not be offer'd upon Earth in any other manner, by himself as High-Priest; that he perform'd the Oblation by Prayer, and that no other manner of offering was necessary to render him, or his Body and Blood, a proper Sacrifice. It does not appear that *Christ* did at any other time,

* Luke xxii. 43.

or Place here on Earth, perform the Oblation of himself. Many and great Divines have said, that *Christ* offer'd himself upon the Cross; and there is no occasion for me to deny it. But I may safely say, that none of the sacred Writers did ever affirm this. *Christ * was once offer'd to bear the sins of many.* By this account, his offering of himself was before his suffering, and in order to it: And this agrees well with what I have said on this Head. *He bare our sins in his own body on the tree,* says *St. Peter †.* And it is certain he was there slain as a voluntary Sacrifice, and underwent the Punishment due to Men, or made Satisfaction to Divine Justice for their Sins. But it is evident that he had as a Priest offer'd himself some Hours before, when he said, *This is my body given for you.*

Sect. 17. But it much concerns us, more particularly to enquire into the Ends of his thus offering his Body and Blood. And it is evident, as hath been already hinted, and is abundantly clear from Scripture, that he was a Sacrifice to expiate the Sins of Men. And in one Sense he hath by this one offering once for all, or for ever, procured *remission of sins* for his whole Church, both Priests and People; so that we have no occasion for such

* Heb. ix. 28.

† 2 Pet. ii. 24.

purgative Sacrifices as were required every Year to be offer'd by the High-Priest of the *Jews*: as I have more largely explained this Point in the first *Discourse* Sect. 18. *Remission of sin* could not be obtained once for all in any other Sense: Nor could *Christians*, according to any other Notion be perfected all at once by the Sacrifice of *Christ*. It is certain that *Christians*, as well as *Jews*, have still occasion to confess, and to obtain Pardon for their wilful Transgression of God's Law, and to beg off the Punishment due to them. But the whole *Christian Church*, consisting of one Society of Priests and People, is for ever perfected, and consecrated for the service of God, and so needs no new purgative Sacrifices. For by this * *one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctify'd*, that is, the whole Body of his Church; which cannot be so disqualify'd for the publick Worship of God as to render their Sacraments ineffectual, or their Services unprofitable by their wilful, or unwilful Pollutions, howsoever contracted. All that die impenitent in their wilful Defilements must undoubtedly bear the Punishment of them in the other World. But the *Christian Church* is not so defiled, much less annulled by them, as that her

* Heb. x. 14.

Ordinances shall thereby lose their Power, and Efficacy, on such as are duly qualify'd to receive them. In this Sense there is no more occasion of offering for Sin *. *Moses* by his purgative Sacrifice first qualify'd the *Israelites*, and their Tabernacle, and its Furniture, for the Worship of God. For he sprinkled the Book, and all the People, the Tabernacle and all the Vessels, with the Blood of the living Creatures offer'd on this occasion, and the Apostle tells us † that with this Blood they were purged: And they could be purged only from their Unworthiness to be employ'd in the Worship of God. Things without Life were capable, I conceive, of no other purgation. The Apostle immediately adds, *It was necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purged with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better Sacrifices than these.* As by the *better Sacrifices* we can rationally understand no other than the Body and Blood of *Christ*, offer'd to God by the Pledges of Bread and Wine; so by the *Heavenly Things*, purged thereby, can be meant nothing but the *Christian Church*, Priests, and People, with their Sacraments, and all parts of the Worship there performed: And it is not unusual in the New

* Heb. x. 18.

† Heb. ix. 19.--22, 23.

Testament to give the Title of *Heavenly* to any Institutions of *Christ Jesus*. And the Church it self is called the *Heavenly * Jerusalem*. The Patterns of these heavenly things were the *Levitical Ordinances*, which were Types and Shadows of the *Christian Worship*, and Sacraments. In the same manner therefore that the whole System of the *Levitical Service* was first purg'd by the Sacrifices offer'd by *Moses*, and this Purgation was Yearly renew'd by the Sacrifices offer'd on the Day when the High-Priest enter'd into the Holy of Holies; in the same manner was the *Christian Service* purg'd once for all, by the Sacrifice personally offer'd by our Lord and Saviour the High-Priest of our Oblation.

In the Prayer at, or after the instituting of the Communion, *Christ*, speaking of the Apostles whom he had sent into the World, says: *For their sakes I consecrate my self, that they also might be consecrated in the truth*. By the Truth, he means the Gospel-Service, or *Christian Worship*, as he does again, when he speaks of *worshiping God in spirit, and in truth*: And indeed this Word in *St. John's* Writings does generally signify the Gospel, as opposite to the Law. The *Levitical High-Priest*, and Priests, were

Sect. 18.

* Heb. xii. 22.

confe-

consecrated by Sacrifice ; you have the whole Description of them in *Exodus* xxix. and *Levit.* viii. ix. *Jesus Christ* consecrated himself, and his Apostles, by the Sacrifice of his Body and Blood. Nay, it deserves our observation that it was *for their sakes* he consecrated himself ; he now acted as a High-Priest, he offer'd a Meal-offering, as *Aaron* did on the Day of his being anointed to his Office *, that in, and by the same Sacrifice he might consecrate them : And it was particularly with this view, that he at that time enter'd upon his Priestly Function, that he might enable them to act as Priests in the Sacrifice which he was now instituting, and that not only from Year to Year as the *Levitical* Priests, but once for all. When he said *Do, or offer this in remembrance of me*, he gave them a Commission to continue the use of this Sacrifice ; but when he thus consecrated them, he farther gave a perpetual Duration to this Commission, so that it need not be renew'd, like that of the *Aaronical* Priests, once a Year. *St. Paul* is generally believed to be Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, and he speaks of himself as consecrated with the rest of the Apostles, though he was an Unbeliever at the time of *Christ's* offering the

* *Levit.* vi. 20.

great Sacrifice : *We have been consecrated* * *once for all*, says he, *by the offering of Christ*. This is a Proof that the Consecration of the Apostles was not confin'd to their present Persons, but was intend- ed to take in all that should afterwards be called to that Office, and their Suc- cessors unto the World's end. And so as all that ever had been, or hereafter should be baptized, obtained a continual free ac- cess to God, by virtue of the Personal Sacrifice of *Christ*; so whoever had been, or should be hereafter ordained to the Apostolical, or Episcopal Office, need never have their Commission renew'd, but have an indelible Character.

But it is observable that *Christ Jesus* Sect. 19. created but one Priesthood, one Society of Men, who were to be in true Unity with their Master, and each other; he gave no Commission, conferr'd no Privi- leges, or perpetual Consecration upon any others, as Evangelical Priests. The Sacrifices offer'd on the Day when the High-Priest enter'd into the most holy Place, were in behalf of *Aaron*, and his Family only ; and could be of no force

* Hebrews x. 10. *I am of opinion these Words ought in Striſtneſs to be render'd thus : We who are employ'd in of- fering the Body of Jesus Christ have been consecrated once for all ; by We, he means himself, and the rest of the Apostles, and declares it to be their office to offer Christ's Body.*

for such as were not of that Line: for the Purgation wrought by the Sacrifice of *Christ* can extend to none but the Apostles, and such as have regularly succeeded them, or that claim under them. To suppose that any other number of Men, or single Man, can without a Power of working Miracles, be qualify'd to perform the Priestly Office, in the *Christian Church*, is to suppose that *Christ* designed two Churches, or Parties of Apostles; which is a direct Contradiction to that Unity which he intended to settle among all Believers. None can question these Truths but such as are engaged in a Schism, or such as are Well-wishers to it. It is true, they whose Succession is regular, have sometimes made Divisions, and Separations from each other: But in this case, I conceive, the Ministrations of both are good, and of Force, so long as there is no mixture of damnable Heresy in them; and they who are the cause of the Schism must answer for it at the last Day. What is done in virtue of their Commission is ratify'd by the authority of the great High-Priest, and for all Abuses of their Commission they are answerable to him. And in the mean time, if it can certainly be made appear who is, or are, the occasion of the Schism, the neighbouring Bishops, and all of the same Order, that have a certain

certain knowledge of it, ought to join in admonishing, and condemning the Leaders in the Schism, and in using all proper means to reduce them to that State of Unity, which was the original Intention of *Christ Jesus* in founding of his Church.

Forasmuch as no Body of Men can with- Sect. 20.
out a continual Miracle keep themselves free from Corruptions, and that Disputes will arise in all Societies more or less concerning their Governours, and the ways and means of their advancement to their Dignity, and the regularity of the Succession an Administration, and their good or ill Qualities: therefore I conceive *Christ*, in prudence and compassion to his Church, did design, by his first original Sacrifice of his Body and Blood, to purge all such accidental Defects, Lapses, and Irregularities, as thro' the Infirmary of Men, or the Art and Policy of *Satan*, are scarce wholly to be avoided. And if the voluntary Sins of Priests, and People, cannot dissolve the *Christian* Church, or forfeit its Character; much less is it to be suppos'd that lesser Faults, and especially Disputes in cases where it is hard for the wisest to say which side is in the right, should have such effects as to annull the Administrations of those who appear to be duly commissioned by the Descendents of the Apostles. There is one particular which of late Ages hath

hath given occasion to Surmises, and even Divisions, in a point, which may I think justly be reduc'd to this head. I mean Lay-deprivations of Bishops, and substituting others in their stead, in a way not so agreeable to the Primitive Method. Now though I am far from approving such violation of Episcopal Succession; yet I cannot but hint my opinion, that those Breaches of Canonical Orders do not at all affect the efficacy of Sacraments, or other religious Offices in the Church of *England*; because I take it to be one of those Irregularities, which were purged by the Sacrifice of *Christ*, and as what cannot always, and altogether be prevented, even though the Church had both the Swords in her Hand, which God never intended. I suppose the *Jewish* Priesthood was no more made subject to the Civil Power, as to its Succession, than the *Christian* Priesthood is: yet it is certain that the Civil *Roman* Government assumed to it self the Power of deposing the High-Priests, and placing others in their stead at discretion. * *Josephus* gives us five Instances of this in one Chapter; *Joazer* was removed by *Cyrenius*, and *Ananus*, whom the Evangelists call *Annas*, put in his room; and *Gratus*, in the eleven Years of his Government, did by force

* *Antiq. L. 8. c. 3.*

remove three High-Priests, *Annas*, *Ismael*, and *Eleazer*, (the two last advanced to that Dignity by his own appointment) and filled their Places with others. The last promoted by him was *Caiaphas*, who sat during the whole time of our Saviour's Ministry, though *Annas* was yet alive. We do not find, that our Saviour did directly, or indirectly condemn this, but he, and the holy Writers do rather acknowledge *Caiaphas* as High-Priest. If indeed *Caiaphas* had not been of the Line of *Aaron*, it cannot be but our Saviour would have disown'd his Authority. And for the same cause, if any should be promoted to the Dignity of a Bishop without a just Ordination, by a mere Lay-Power; then he would have the name of a Bishop without any spiritual Right, and so withdraw Obedience from such a one would be just, and meritorious. *Christ's* Sacrifice was intended to wipe of the Stains of such as are ordained Bishops, though not in the most pure, and justifiable manner; and of People that are baptized, though they did not receive, or preserve their Baptism, so undefiled as in strictness they ought: To wipe them off, not so as to free them from Punishment hereafter, if their Defilements were gross and wilfull; but so as that these Corruptions shall not pollute the Worship of the Church,

Church, at least not to such a degree as to render her Sacraments, or Administrations, of none Effect. And in this Sense *Christ* hath in the most perfect manner put away sin^{*}; if, by Sin, we mean those Infirmities of our Nature, and other Pollution whatever they be, which make us unfit, and unworthy to appear in God's Presence, or to join in his Worship: For notwithstanding any Stain of Blood which descends to us from our first Parents, or any forfeiture of our Souls incurr'd by our own Disobedience, whether we are of the Clergy, or of the Laity, our Personal Faults, or Vices, cannot disqualify the Church from performing her religious Services in a manner acceptable to God; nor us from joining in it, till the Church by her just Discipline denies us that Privilege. The power of Sin is in this respect wholly annull'd, and abolish'd, and she has no occasion to get her Character renew'd every Year, as the Jewish Priests and People were oblig'd to do. In no other Sense hath *Christ* put away Sin, or wholly annull'd it.

Sect. 21.

Christ, by this one Sacrifice once personally offer'd, hath not only made the Purgative Sacrifices of the Law unnecessary, but hath once for all abolish'd them, and all other *Levitical* Ordinances, and

* Heb. ix. 26.

Institu-

Institutions of Moses, * he wholly took them away, and nailed them to his cross. He hath declared that the Sacrifices, Offerings, and Burnt-Offerings for Sin requir'd by the Law, are things which God no longer desires, neither hath pleasure therein. This is one of the Liberties purchas'd by the Blood of Christ, in which the Apostle admonishes all Christians to stand free, and not to permit themselves again to be entangled with that yoke of bondage.

But there is a remission of sins also very different from the former, which is owing to the great, or personal Sacrifice of Christ, consider'd as truly expiatory, and as a Satisfaction for the Sins of Men. I mean the taking away the Guilt, and Punishment of all our wilful Transgressions of God's Law, upon our Repentance, and making proper Application at the Throne of Grace. For it is the || blood of Jesus Christ which cleanseth us from all sin. The Merits of his Death are the great Treasure of the Church, by which alone our Souls can be ransom'd from that Death, and Misery, which is the wages of Sin. This is a thing so well known to all Christians, that I can see no occasion to enlarge upon it. I shall rather make it my Business to shew the differ-

Se&. 22.

* Col. iii. 14.

† Gal. v. 8.

|| 1 Joh. i. 7.

ence between this *remission of sins*, and that spoken of before.

Sect. 23.

That *remission of sins*, whereby the Church is qualify'd to continue her publick Worship, and by which her Sacraments have their Efficacy, notwithstanding the Infirmities and Sins of her Priests and People, is a Privilege for which we have no occasion to pray, or intercede with God, because the Church is in actual possession of it: we have it without seeking for; we need not put ourselves to the cost of Sacrifice to renew or make good our claim. *Christ* endow'd his Church with this Liberty of free Access to God upon her first Foundation; and is therefore by himself call'd **THE WAY** and **THE DOOR**; because by him the whole Church is introduced to make her Requests known unto God. But the *remission of sins*, which concerns us as particular Men, and by which we are deliver'd from the Wrath to come, and from the Torments of Hell, is not to be obtained without very considerable pains, and labour, humiliation, compunction, prayer, and proper application to God thro' *Christ*, and the inward Sacrifice of a broken heart, and a bruised Spirit. If indeed, the Sacrifice of *Christ* were not of a Purgative Nature, and had not removed from us that natural Disability we are under

der to Worship God in an acceptable manner, all our Repentance, and Prayers, and even Tears would be in vain. For we are corrupt by Nature, and God does not permit us to come to him, but only in virtue of the great Sacrifice offer'd by *Christ*. And without this all Men must be yet in their Sins, nay, they could not upon any certain Grounds dare to ask Pardon of God. For by *Christ* only we have access to the Father. And therefore we are to esteem this Purgative Power of *Christ*'s Sacrifice, as necessary in order to our applying the Merits of the Expiation made by it to our Souls. For we must first have leave to make our address to God, before we can to any purpose beg forgiveness of him.

That remission of Sins whereby *Christi-* Sect. 24.
ans are permitted to draw near to God was a Right conferr'd all at once by *Christ Jesus* on his Church, and on every single Member of it, not only on the Body of Believers that were in the World at the time of our Saviour's offering the great Sacrifice, but on the Church of all succeeding Ages; and to all that shou'd live, and die in his Communion. For it is in it self evident, and allowed by all *Christians*, that the Church hath this Liberty of worshiping God, in confidence of the Mediation of *Christ*, without any

other purgative Sacrifices ; and she holds it by an indefeizable Right never to be forfeited, or lost. But the Pardon of particular Mens Sins was not thus obtain'd, and conferr'd all at once ; but is occasionally applied to Men, as they do, or shall need it, and prepare themselves for the receiving of it. Sins before they were committed might be, and are so far pardoned by the divine Declarations contained in the New Testament, that they do not, nor ever shall deprive the Church of her Privilege of access to God, and of the Efficacy of her Sacraments, and Ministration, nor the Sinner himself of the right of performing his part in religious Offices, till he be deprived of it by the Authority of the Church. But I conceive it impossible that the guilt of Sin can be taken off, till the Sinner have repented, and used all proper means to reconcile himself to God thro' *Christ*. Therefore *Christ* could not apply the Merits of his Death to particular Men, so as to free them from Guilt, and Punishment, because their Sins were not yet committed, they and their Sins had not yet a being when *Christ* offer'd his Great Sacrifice ; much less had they confess'd, and repented of them. And I take it for as certain a Truth as any contained in Scripture, that without Repentance no wilful Sinner

ner can be pardoned so as to escape Punishment in the other World : and that therefore the good Effects of *Christ's* Sacrifice could not be applied to particular Men at the Time of his offering it, because infinite Numbers of Men not yet born would hereafter have occasion for Pardon, but could not have Pardon granted them, because they had not yet repented of their Sins ; nay, they had not yet committed them. God thro' *Christ* so far forgives the Sins of *Christians*, even without Repentance, that he does not forbid them to come into his Presence, or the publick Worship in order to confess their Sins, and obtain Pardon for them. God so far shews his Indulgence to the whole *Christian* Church, as not to reject her Services, or annul her Sacraments, for the private or publick offences of the Priests, and People ; but he does not forgive the Sins of particular Men, so far as to free them from Punishment, till by their personal Repentance, and Amendment they have qualified themselves for his Mercy. And farther the Church, and the several Branches of it, and the Men whereof it consists, must in every Age expect to meet with new Difficulties, to feel particular Wants, to stand in need of special Favours, which it was not in the Nature of Things possible that God should give Redress, or ap-

ply Relief, or make a grant of at the time of *Christ's* Passion.

Sect. 25.

And from hence appears the necessity of having still a Sacrifice in the *Christian* Church. A Sacrifice not like those which were killed by the high Priest of the *Jews*, and whose Blood was carried into the Holy of Holies, and whereby the Priests, and People, and place of Worship, were so reconciled to God, as that he accepted their services there for the year next coming: For *Christ's* whole Church is so far reconciled to God once for ever, as to need no such Remission of Sins, and where Remission of these is, there is no farther occasion for such Sacrifice for Sin, as was yearly offer'd by the *Jews* on the tenth Day of the seventh Month. But it appears by what hath been said in *Discourse* 1. Sect. 2, 3, 4. that Sacrifice is a way of Worship instituted by God himself; that God's People did ever Worship him in this manner, and that tho' God hath often by his Prophets reprov'd Men for their abuse of Sacrifice; yet he never absolutely abolish'd it; nay, that he so far approved of it, that he decreed the Redemption of the World to be accomplish'd by the Sacrifice of *Christ's* Body, and Blood. And tho' it is certain that all Bloody Sacrifices, nay all that were first brought into use by the *Levitical* Law, are done a way

way by *Christ*; yet there are very plain intimations of a Sacrifice still to continue in the *Christian Church*, and that such intimations are given us even by the Writers of the new Testament. (See *Discourse I. Sect. 41.*) It appears by what was said next above, that tho' the Merits of the great Sacrifice offer'd by *Christ* in person are sufficient, abundantly sufficient, to expiate the Sins of all Men; yet these Merits could not actually be applied to Men that were to live in after Ages, by *Christ*, when he solemnized the Sacrifice of our Redemption. It farther appears, that *Christ* offer'd the Sacrifice of his Body and Blood, by deputing Bread and Wine, and presenting them to God the Father as representative Symbols of that his Body and Blood. And tho' he was to die but once, and could therefore be sacrificed but once in his own Person, yet the representative Symbols might be, and were a proper Sacrifice. I proceed to consider,

II. How far *Christ* did command this Sacrifice to be perpetuated. *Do this in remembrance of me.*

When *Christ* bids us to *do*, or *offer this*, Sect. 26. he cannot mean less than that we should take Bread and Wine, and offer them as deputed by him to represent his Body and Blood. When we are commanded to do

what *Christ* did, we must in all respects follow him, so far as the Nature of the thing will bear. And few actions can be done with less difficulty than those of taking Bread and Wine, breaking the one, pouring out the other, and presenting both to God the Father: This therefore must be done by all Priests who sincerely desire to fulfil the Will of their dying Master. This the Primitive Church ever did, and indeed all Churches, even of the darkeſt as well as brighteſt Ages; they all did it in a ſolemn Form and Manner. This was in ſome ſort enjoined to be done by the firſt *Engliſh* Liturgy drawn by our Reformers in the Reign of King *Edward* the VIth.

Sect. 27.

Chriſt offered his Sacrifice in order to his Death, the Bread as a Figure of his Body ſoon after to be ſlain, the Wine as a Figure of his Blood ſoon after to be ſhed. This we cannot do; becauſe *Chriſt* can die no more. And if he could die again, yet it would be impious for us to offer his Body and Blood, in order to its being crucified and ſhed again. If he were in this manner to have been often offered, he muſt often have ſuffered ſince the Foundation of the World. But we may, and ought to offer Bread and Wine, as Reſemblances of his Body and Blood by his own appointment. And this is clearly what he requires of

* Heb. ix. 26.

us: And if we do it not, we fail in our Duty toward Him.

It is not necessary that a Sacrifice of Remembrance should be offered for the same Ends precisely, for which the principal Sacrifice was offer'd. We have a remarkable Instance of this in the Passover. The Lambs kill'd in *Egypt* were a Sacrifice for redeeming the first born from that Death, to which they had otherways been liable, or to prevail with God that *the Destroyer might not come into the houses of the Israelites to smite them.* * And this first Sacrifice was likewise intended to be a Pattern, to shew them how they were to observe this Ordinance in their Generations for ever; for they were *to keep this Service* in the Land which God had promised to give them. || Yet when they were settled in the Land of *Canaan* they could no longer offer the Lambs for these two Ends. For their first-born were not now in danger of being slain, as they had been when the Passover was first enjoined; nor did they want a pattern for offering their Sacrifice, after it had been once done, in the Night on which they came out of *Egypt*. Therefore all the Passovers observed, and the Lambs slain on this occasion in future Ages, were only Sacrifices of Remembrance offer'd by way of Thanks-giving to God

Sect. 28.

* Ex. xii. 23. Heb. xi. 28. || Ex. xii. 25.

for

for the Deliverance of the *Israelites* from the *Egyptian* Bondage : tho' yet it had also an atoning virtue; for the Blood of these Lambs made an atonement for the Soul, as well as that of other Sacrifices. * And in truth all Sacrifice was in it's own Nature Propitiatory, or atoning, whether it was Bloody, or unbloody.

Sect. 29.

Therefore tho' the first Ends of *Christ's* Sacrifice are already obtained, that is, tho' the Right of the Christian Church to perform her publick Worship be fix'd, and settled on an immoveable Foundation, and the *Levitical* Law be effectually repealed; and the Merits of the great Sacrifice were sufficient to procure pardon for all Sin whatsoever; and therefore we cannot rationally offer our Sacrifice for the same Ends, or with the same view that *Christ* first offer'd it; yet we may, and must do, or offer it, as *Christ* hath commanded, by way of Remembrance, or Thanks-giving for his great Mercy in the Redemption of the World by *Christ Jesus*. The Passover was but once offer'd to God as a Sacrifice for averting of Evil, the death of the first-born, from the *Israelites*; it was offer'd in after Ages by way of Thanks, and Praise, for the preservation of the first-born, and in general to engage God's Mercy, and favour toward his People, but as a Sacri-

* Lev. xvii. 11.

ce still. (See *Disc. I. Sect. 12.*) And if
 he many hundred following Passovers
 were Sacrifices in Remembrance of the
 first Passover in *Egypt*, much more rea-
 sonable is it to believe, that the Remem-
 brance of the Sacrifice of our Redemption,
 the greatest that ever was offer'd, is to be
 a Sacrifice also. It has already been shew'd
 that when the Bloody Sacrifices, and all
 other *Levitical* Ordinances were to cease,
 yet a Sacrifice of Thanks-giving was to re-
 main in force. (See *Disc. I. Sect. 41.*) And
 it does in the same place appear, that the
 Apostle St. *Paul* makes mention of a Sa-
 crifice of Confession, or Thanks-giving,
 and that the Communion is the Sacrifice
 there meant. And it was for this reason
 that the Primitive *Christians* commonly
 call'd this Sacrament the *Eucharist*, that is
Thanks-giving. This was the Name they
 gave to the Bread and Wine, offer'd on
 the Christian Altar as Representatives of
Christ's Body and Blood. For it appears
 that all Sacrifices of old took their name
 from the end for which they were offer'd.
 And as the Bullock, or other living Crea-
 ture offer'd for Benefits received, was called
Thanks, or *Praise* by the *Jews*; so the
 Christian Sacrifice of *Thanks* for the Re-
 demption of Mankind was for the same
 reason called *Eucharist*. See *Disc. I.*
Sect. 21.

Tho'

Sect. 30.

Tho' this *Eucharist* was ever esteem'd principally a Sacrifice of Thanks-giving; yet it was ever offer'd by the best Christians with hopes, and expectations of attaining thereby all the Effects of *Christ's* Death, I mean *Remission of Sins*, or the Forgiveness of all Punishment due to them that offer'd it, for their wilful Transgressions, and all the Benefits of *Christ's* Passion consequent thereupon. For it is a Sacrifice of *Christ's* Body and Blood, of the thing which God hath chosen, and which he accepts, and therefore in its Sacramental Nature fit to prevail with him for the purposes to which he design'd it. Our Saviour calls * *the Cup the New Covenant in his Blood*, and declares it is *shed*, † or *poured out for the remission of sins*. Modern Doctors have taken pains to have this understood of the Natural Blood of *Christ* only. But it is evident that the holy Writers meant it of the Cup, or Wine in the Communion, which is in Mystery the same with his Blood, tho' in Substance perfectly distinct from it. And as the Blood of the Covenant was spoken of in the Law and Prophets, as the Foundation of all the Privileges enjoy'd by the *Israelites*, so is the Cup in the *Eucharist* mention'd by our Saviour as the means by which all the Mercies of God in *Christ Jesus* are conveyed to the

* Luke xxii. 19.

† Mat. xxvi. 28.

Church, and to every good Communicant. For when he styles it *the new Covenant in his Blood*, his meaning is, that as the Covenant between God and all the *Israelites*, was first establish'd, and afterwards continued, by virtue of the Blood of Animals shed in Sacrifice by his direction; so the Covenant betwixt God and the Christian Church, was first struck, and is for ever to be continued by this Sacramental Blood of his, which is in Mystery * *the Blood of the Everlasting Covenant.* And *Remission of Sins* is here to be taken in its widest Sense, as it signifies not only a freedom from our unworthiness to be implied in the Worship of God, but also the taking off all Punishment threatned to Sinners. For it is certain *Christ* offer'd his Body and Blood, for both these Ends.

No Meal-offering was attended with a Drink-offering among the *Jews*, unless some Animal were offer'd at the same time. See *Disc. I. Sect. 9.* And because our Saviour's original Sacrifice was not accomplish'd without the shedding of his Blood; therefore he not only added a Drink-offering, but seems to lay a singular stress on this Appendage of his Sacrifice, and makes it the Cement and Seal of the Covenant between God and his People, as being that which supplies the place of his Blood,

* Heb. xiii. 20.

and

and is his Blood to all intents, and purposes of Religion, and by the Power of it all the Articles of the Covenant are confirm'd between God, and them. And as forgiveness of Sin is the first Article of this Covenant, so Divine Grace, or Spiritual Strength in this Life, and Eternal Happiness in the Life to come, are the consequences of it. After this to dispute whether the Eucharist be a Sacrifice propiatory, and expiatory, is a mere strife about Words.

Sect. 32.

One principal use of Sacrifice is to enforce our Prayers, and render them more prevalent with God; as I have shew'd in *Discourse I. Sect. 28, 29.* We may certainly with greater confidence ask of God Pardon of our Sins, Divine assisting Grace, and eternal Life in, and by this Sacrifice, than any other Benefits whatsoever: because as hath been just now hinted, these are the Articles, or Terms of the Covenant settled, and confirmed by this Sacrifice. Yet we are not in offering this Sacrifice to confine our Devotions to these heads only. As the Eucharist is the only Sacrifice of the Christian Church; so in and by it we are to intercede with God for all other Blessings to ourselves, and to other Men, especially to the Christian Church. Thus did the Primitive Christians. After the Bishop, or Priest had offer'd the Bread, and Wine to God, and said the solemn

Solemn Prayer of Consecration, immediately followed the most solemn Intercession for all Men, especially for all Saints, for all Mercies, both publick, and private. And when can we pray with more just hopes of Success, than when we put up our Petitions to God in virtue of the Sacrifice instituted by his Son, in virtue of his Body and Blood represented to God by Symbols of his own appointment? Yet, as hath been hinted, we are not to put up these Prayers with so great an assurance, as those in which we ask only the fulfilling of his Covenant, to ourselves and all truly Christian Communicants. For that very Sacrifice, which we offer to God for the obtaining these Ends is intended by God as an answer to our Prayers, and a Testimony of our Persons, and Prayers being accepted by God.

From what hath been said it is evident, Sect. 33. that the Eucharist is not only a Sacrifice, but that it answers all the Ends of the numerous Sacrifices, and Oblations of the Levitical Law; so that it may be justly styled *all Sacrifices in one*. Even the old Meal-offering appointed by *Moses* served for all purposes that a bloody Sacrifice could do, when he that offer'd it was not able to bring an Animal: See *Discourse I. sect. 8.* And it is true that as to its intrinsic value the Meal-offering of the
Jews

Jews was not inferior to the Bread offer'd in the Christian Church. The advantage of the Christian Sacrifices does not consist in the gross bulk of the Materials offer'd to God. The Excellency of it proceeds from much higher Considerations, namely, that it is a Sacrifice instituted by one greater than *Moses*, a Sacrifice offer'd, and founded by the Son of God, and in which he offer'd himself for our Redemption, appointed to be the Figure of his Flesh and Blood, and that is his Flesh and Blood so far as is possible, without a change of Substance or Nature; and so as the *Jewish* Meal-offering never was. The Prophet *Malachi* speaks of *Incense*, and a pure Meal-offering to be offer'd every where * from the rising up of the Sun to the going down thereof, by which God's Name should be great among the Gentiles. Incense is the known Emblem of Prayer. One sort of this was to be laid on the Meal-offering when it was brought to the Priest, and to be burnt in the Fire by him, and this with the mixture of Oyl, and part of the Meal-offering it-self was call'd the Memorial, which was that by which the Sacrifice was brought in Remembrance before God. But as the Incense typified the Prayers of the Christian Church, so the pure Meal-offering does clearly denote the Eu-

* Mal. i. 11.

Lev. ii. 1.

Eucharist; which is the only Meal-offering that hath ever been offered to the true God in the *Gentile* World, or in every Place. For the *Jewish* Meal-offering could by *Moses's* Law be brought to no Altar, but that which stood in the Door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation. And thus is this Antient Prophecy remarkably fulfill'd in the Christian *Eucharist*. And it hath been observed, by many Christian Writers, that several *Jewish* Rabbies have affirmed, that all *Sacrifices* shall cease in the Times of the *Messias*, except the *Mincha*, or *Meal-offering*.

Let me make some Reflections on the Doctrines here laid down, and so conclude. And,

1. By duly offering to God, the Sacrifice Sect. 34.
of the Eucharist, we do the greatest Honour to God the Father, that can be done him by rational Creatures. *Christ's* offering to him his own Body and Blood, was the most valuable Service that ever was, or can be paid to the Divine Majesty here on Earth, the greatest that God is capable of receiving. He who offer'd it, if we consider him even in his State of Incarnation, was superior to all Creatures. And he had nothing of greater Price to offer than his own Body, and Blood. There ne-

ver was, or can be a Person of greater
 Worth to offer a Sacrifice to God the Fa-
 ther ; nor did this World ever afford
 Thing of greater Value to be offer'd. It
 must needs therefore be confess'd, that our
 Saviour did, by this Sacrifice, perform the
 most worthy and sublime Act of Worship
 to God the Father that can possibly be paid
 him. *Cræsus* King of *Lydia*, is reported
 to have melted down by way of Sacrifice
 to his Gods (such as they were) all his
 Golden, and Silver Vessels, and Furniture
 in which he abounded, and to have requir-
 ed all his Subjects to do the same. But if
 all the Kings, and People in the Universe
 had brought all their Treasures to one com-
 mon Heap, or Pile, and offer'd this vast
 Mass of Riches to the true God, it would
 all have been a sordid, worthless, contempti-
 ble Oblation, if compar'd with that Body
 of *Christ* without Spot or Blemish, which
 was conceived and inhabited by the Holy
Ghost, born of the Virgin *Mary*, from
 which, Rays of divine Power and Good-
 ness were perpetually streaming forth, and
 shedding themselves upon miserable Men
 for the Cure of their Diseases, for their
 Relief from the Tyranny of evil Spirits,
 and for the Illustration of the excellent
 Doctrine which he taught; and which
 was afterwards rais'd from the Dead, and
 is since set down on the right Hand of the
 divine

divine Majesty. The Apostle doth justly magnify this Sacrifice, when he observes, that we were not redeemed with Gold or Silver, but with * *the precious Blood of Christ*. And tho' *Christian* Priests and People do not offer the very natural Body and Blood of *Christ*, and it would be inhuman so to do, yet they offer what *Christ* hath appointed instead thereof, and what God therefore accepts as such. They offer what is much to be preferr'd before the Cattle upon a thousand Hills, before all the hidden and visible Treasures of the Earth. The principal End of all Sacrifice is to acknowledge God's sovereign Dominion and Goodness. (See *Discourse I. Sect. 17.*) *Christ Jesus* made the most ample Acknowledgement of this Sort, when he, who even in his human Nature is the second Person in the Universe, yet offer'd his Body and Blood as a Sacrifice to him. And we do the same, in the best Manner that he hath directed and enabled us to do it, when we duly solemnize the Eucharist. By this, we do, in the most effectual Manner, declare and confess the Almighty to be the Father of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, the Fountain of Divinity; we do there, in the most proper Way that possibly we can, express our Belief of his most lovely Attribute, his Goodness, and Love of Mankind,

as being the Author of our Redemption and Salvation in *Christ Jesus*; and that all Blessings are derived from the Father thro' the Son to us. The only singular Honour which the primitive Church paid to God the Father, and which they did not pay to the Son was this, that they forbade the Prayers at the Altar, or in the Communion Service, to be directed to any of the three divine Persons but the Father only.

Sect. 35.

2. By offering the Sacrifice of the Eucharist we best shew our Value and Esteem of the great Sacrifice of our Redemption. I have sufficiently proved (in *Disc. I. Sect. 29, 30, 31.*) that the most honorary external Service we can pay to God is that of Sacrifice: therefore it was reasonable, that the acknowledgements we make to him for the greatest Blessing that was ever confer'd on Mankind, should be done in this most honorary Way of Worship. It is true sincere hearty Thanks, and Praise, even without any outward Expressions of it are well-pleasing to God. But when the inward Sense of Mens Minds is declared by Words, and outward Actions, and when great Numbers, and Bodies of Men join with an unanimous Devotion in these Words and Actions, then more Honour is done to God; and the Service paid him is therefore still more acceptable to him, and especially when those Words or Actions are of his

own

own Appointment. It is true, all outward Actions done without inward Faith, Devotion, and other good Dispositions, are despised, and even loathed by God. When he requires any outward Service from us, he, at the same time, expects that we should do it with such a Frame and Composure of Mind, as best fits and becomes those who are employ'd in this outward Service: Therefore, the Question is not whether inward Gratitude of the Mind be not better than outward Declarations of it? but whether inward Gratitude express'd by outward Declarations be not better than without them; and especially when God hath expressly commanded those outward Declarations? which is clearly the present Case: For no Commandment of God in the Old or New Testament is more clear than that we should *do*, or *offer* this Bread and Cup in Remembrance of *Christ*. And what greater Thing can be said of any Fact, perform'd by the greatest Person that ever lived, than this; that the Memory of it still remains both with God and Man; that it is often, and even daily renewed and commemorated with the most solemn Devotions, and the most excellent Worship that God ever prescrib'd to Men; that is, by Sacrifice? And this may be said of the great Work of our Redemption, or might at least have been said,

of it for several hundred Years together, in the best Times of the *Christian* Church. This was the Remembrance of it which *Christ* intended, and for which all good *Christians* should use their best Endeavours that it may be revived as to all Particulars in which it hath been corrupted or impaired. It is not easy to say, or conceive, how Men can shew a greater and more real Regard to the Sacrifice of our Redemption, than by taking all Occasions to present the Memorial of it to God, and making their Hopes and Comfort depend wholly upon it. And when infinite Numbers of Men do this, even as many as are good Communicants thro' the whole World, then is a just Esteem paid to *Christ*, as the Lamb of God that takes away the Sins of the World, as he became a Sacrifice to make Satisfaction for our Guilt. If we relied upon our own Act and Deed, or placed any Merits in the Eucharist offer'd by us, as distinguished from the great personal Sacrifice of *Christ*, this might justly be deem'd a Lessening of that only truly meritorious Oblation. But all sound *Christians* consider the Eucharist as a Means of drawing down from Heaven all Blessings upon the Priests and People that offer it, not by any separate Power that is in the Eucharist, as a Sacrifice distinct from that of *Christ Jesus*, but by its being the same
with

with it, the same in Mystery tho' not in Substance. I am mistaken, if it be possible to set a greater Value, to ascribe more Worth and Dignity to the great Sacrifice, than by affirming, that all the Benefits that flow from the Eucharist are originally derived to us from that Fountain Head; or that we can give more Honour to our ever blessed Redeemer, and the Redemption wrought by him, than by depending on the Sacrifice of his Body and Blood, for the Supply of all our necessary spiritual Wants and for our Improvement in Grace here, and in Glory hereafter. And this I take to be the plain Meaning of frequently offering the Sacrifice of the Eucharist.

3. By asserting the Eucharist to be a sec. 30. sacrifice, and practising of it as such, we do best shew our just Esteem of this Sacrament For since Sacrifice is the most excellent Worship, it follows, that if the Eucharist be not a Sacrifice, it cannot be the most excellent Worship, and therefore, they who deny the Eucharist to be a Sacrifice, must of Consequence believe it to be an Ordinance inferior to the Passover: For that certainly was a Sacrifice. (See *Disc. I. Sect. 12.*) Nay from hence it would follow, that all the Sacrifices of old, offer'd by the *Jews*, were more lively Types of *Christ* than the Eucharist. Even in being Sacrifices they were Types of *Christ's* Bo-

dy, and more lively Types than our Communion-Bread, if they were Sacrifices, and that be not. It is sufficient to provoke the Concern of an honest *Christian*, to consider how some that shew a Zeal for our Religion, yet can speak of Sacrifice with Contempt, not considering, as I charitably presume, that our Redemption it self was wrought by Sacrifice. And for this Reason all judicious *Christians* must see that it is an Honour to the Eucharist, that it is a Sacrifice, and the most worthy and eminent in its Kind, of any that was ever offered by mere Men, or instituted by God, as sufficiently appears from what hath been and shall be said on this Subject. When God by his Prophet *Malachi* had declared that * *a pure Meal-offering should be offered in every Place*, it presently follows for my Name shall be great among the *Heathen*, saith the Lord of Hosts. Sacrifice was ever esteemed the most honorary Worship that could be paid to the divine Majesty. And therefore God's Name was to be magnified among the *Gentiles*, because the *Christian* Sacrifice of Bread, the pure Meal-offering was to be presented at Altars erected to the true God, in all Parts of the *Heathen* World. This Prophecy hath actually and literally been fulfilled: For in what Part of the then known World was

Mal. i. 11.

not

not this eminent Worship paid to the true God in the antient Times of *Christianity*? How shall it be proved that the Name of God hath been duly magnified among the *Heathen*, if the most excellent Worship have not been paid to him in their Countries? Or, how could it be proved to the *Heathen* of that Age, who universally esteem'd Sacrifice the most excellent Worship? Let us take Heed that we don't elude, or enervate the Oracles of God by modern Glosses.

4. As this is a Sacrifice of Thanks-Sect. 38.
giving, let us make it our principal Care to have our Hearts duly affected with a Sense of those Mercies which we enjoy by Virtue of the great Sacrifice, of which this is a Remembrance, and especially with the infinite Nature and Sovereignty of that God, before whom we appear, when we come to the Holy Communion. The first End of all Sacrifice is to honour God, and acknowledge his Dominion. But we shall do this with the greater Chearfulness, when our Minds are first fill'd with a Perception of his great Mercies and Indulgencies to Mankind in general, and to our selves in particular. Every Communicant therefore should make it his chief Business to imprint upon his own Mind the Thoughts of God's wonderful Power, and Goodness, manifested in the Creation of the World, and
of

of all Men and of himself; with the Wisdom of his Providence, in governing the World in such a Manner as he does: And no good Man can want a Proof of this, if he reflects on the Methods by which he hath been brought into that happy State, in which he now stands. But above all, it behoves a Communicant to have his Heart touch'd with a just Sense of the infinite Mercy of God, in sending his Son into the World to teach Men the Way to Heaven; and more particularly for the Provision he made in him of a Sacrifice for our Sins. For it was principally for this End that God ordain'd the Sacrifice of the Eucharist, and therefore on this our Thoughts should chiefly be employ'd, while we are preparing our selves for this holy Sacrament, and while we are engag'd in the Celebration of it. And as the Remembrance of these Things will give us a just Sense of God's Goodness, so if we farther consider the immense Power which was necessary to make a World, and all Things therein, whereby our Saviour wrought so many Miracles, whereby he was conceived in the Virgin's Womb raised from the Dead, and carried up into Heaven, and whereby he afterwards gradually established the *Christian* Religion, in Opposition to the Craft and Violence of hellish Spirits, and of the *Gentile* and *Jewish* World, that Power by which all
Enemies

enemies to his eternal Truths shall be
crush'd, and broken in pieces like Potters
vessels; this will, at the same time, fill us
with Joy and Reverence, and teach us to
approach him with a due Mixture of Ex-
ultation and Trembling, which best of all
benefits Men, when they come before him
on purpose to make an Acknowledgment
of his sovereign Dominion and Love to
Mankind.

5. And to this Purpose, I mean, that Sect. 32.
we may have our Souls possess'd with a
full Persuasion of our Obligations to God,
and of his Power and Greatness, and good
inclinations to Mankind; let us convince
our selves of our natural Unworthiness to
appear before God, and our Disability to
perform any Service that may deserve his
Acceptance. Let us remember that we are
the Posterity of corrupted Parents, driven
from Paradise, placed out of the reach of
the Fruit of the Tree of Life, for their
Transgression of God's Laws, forbid all
Access to the divine Majesty, and laid un-
der a Sentence of Condemnation, from
which we are not in any Measure able to
extricate our selves by the Dint of our
own Reason, or by any Means, which na-
tural Sense could point out to us; and
that we are ransom'd from this unhappy
State by virtue of that great Sacrifice alone,
which we commemorate in the Eucharist.

And

And it deserves our singular Consideration that it is a Privilege obtain'd by the first Offering personally made by *Christ*, that we are put into a Capacity to worship God and especially to offer this Sacrifice of the Eucharist to him, as may be seen in *Sec. 18. Disc. I.* and the 17, 18, 19 of *this*. For it was by *Christ's* once offering his Body and Blood, that the Apostles were consecrated to their Office, and the *Christian* Priesthood founded; and that the People of the Church were qualified to join in so sacred a Service. By Consequence it is by that great Sacrifice of *Christ* in Person, that the Sacraments retain their Efficacy, and that the Church it self subsists. And we have no Occasion to perplex our selves with Scruples concerning the Call of our Pastors; so long as we may easily satisfy our selves that our Bishops received their Ordination from such as were justly believed to have their Succession from the Apostles, and no Priests are allow'd to officiate but such as have been ordained by them. And all known or unknown Defects, or Flaws in their Manner of Promotion, Election, and Ordination, all Irregularities and Blemishes in their Persons, and Ministrations, are cured by the infinite Merits and super-abundant Efficacy of the personal Sacrifice of *Christ*; they are so far cur'd, I mean, that the Church and Sacraments

ments are not annull'd, or impair'd by the Faults or Follies of Men. It is owing to this great Sacrifice, that we have the one single Oblation of the Eucharist instead of the numerous Sacrifices, and endless Rites of the *Levitical* Law; that we have Forgiveness of all our wilful Transgressions seal'd to us, either in Baptism or in the holy Eucharist; that we have Grace to help in time of Need, and eternal Life assuredly promised to us, if we do not fail in the Performance of the Conditions required on our Part: These are the Mercies and Blessings for which we use to offer this Sacrifice; and they are sufficient to open the Lips of all devout *Christians*, and make their Mouths shew forth God's Praise. And they who have a just Sense of the Value of them, will think they can never too frequently or too earnestly pay their Devotions to Heaven, on these Accounts.

6. From what hath been already said, Sect. 40.
it is easy to see one Reason why the Eucharist is a spiritual Sacrifice; namely, because we cannot perceive the Nature of it by our bodily Senses, but by our spiritual Faculties. We see, and feel, and taste, and smell it to be Bread and Wine, but by our inward Perception we discern them to be the Body and Blood of *Christ*. And tho' we know Bread and Wine to be poor beggarly

garly Elements, and a very worthless Sacrifice in themselves considered : Yet when we view them in a spiritual Light as designed by our Saviour to represent his Body and Blood, and as such to be offer'd to God, we cannot doubt of their Virtue and Efficacy, for all those Purposes for which they were intended ; we cannot but esteem them the richest Sacrifice that ever was offer'd, excepting the Principal. And we have the greater Reason to confide in it, when we consider *Christ* as the *High-Priest of our Oblation*, always appearing in the highest Heavens the true Holy of Holies, to enforce the Sacrifice of the Church with his own natural Body and Blood, by which he is able to save to the utmost, all that come to God by him. It is true, *Papists* and *Protestants* are agreed, in calling the Communion a spiritual Sacrifice. The *Papists* call it a spiritual Sacrifice, because, tho' they assert the very Substance of *Christ's* Body to be in the Sacrament, yet, they say, it is there only in a spiritual Manner, which to me, seems an inconsistent contradictory Doctrine. Some *Protestants* call it a spiritual Sacrifice, because they think it not to be a real, but only a figurative Sacrifice. The *Lutherans* and *Calvinists* do both of them, according to their several Schemes assert that the very natural Body and Blood

of *Christ* is in the Communion, tho' the Substance of the Bread and Wine remain there also ; yet they will not allow, as the *Papists* do, that it is there to be offered to God. I take it for certain, that they do all greatly err in affirming, the very Substance of *Christ's* Body to be there ; and the *Papists* do most of all err in affirming, that the Bread and Wine vanish, and are no more, when the Words of Consecration have once been pronounced. And it is evident, from Scripture, that *Christ's* real Body was to be offered but once. Therefore, I rather subscribe to the antient Doctrine of the Church in the purest Ages, which was, that the Eucharist was a spiritual Sacrifice, because one Thing was seen and another meant ; the Bread and Wine were visible, the Body and Blood of *Christ* designed or represented by them : Therefore they called it a mental, rational, intellectual, or spiritual Sacrifice. The Primitive Church, indeed, never dream'd of any Body or Blood in the Sacrament, but what were seen, and what they believed to be Bread and Wine. But they considered them there, as the Body and Blood of *Christ* in Mystery, and in a religious, tho' not natural Sense, and as such they offer'd them to God, and therefore as a real Sacrifice.

7. Since the Eucharist is so great Sect. 41.
and

and excellent a Sacrifice, let us beware that we be guilty of none of those Abuses, which Men of old committed, in relation to this Way of Worship. (See *Section 18. of this Discourse.*

(1.) And first, and especially, that we do not perform the Priest's Part in making this good Oblation, without being duly commission'd for so sacred an Office. *Christ* consecrated one Body of Men for this Purpose. And the Bishops of the *Eastern*, and *Western* Church have ever been believed to derive their Succession from them. And since no others do assume to themselves this Privilege, we have just Reason to believe, that they are the Men. For it is certain, that *Christ* shall, when he comes a second time, find a *Steward*, or *Ruler over his Household* * to give them Meat in due Season, and one too appointed by his Lord. † But if the Succession should once fail, it would be impossible, without a Miracle, to repair, or renew it; all the Christian People in the World, by uniting their Suffrages together could not give any Authority to offer this Sacrifice, since it is a Power that *Christ* hath reserved to himself. He who gives Meat to *Christ's* Family must be appointed by his proper Lord. And it is certain, none can be so appointed but the Descendents of the Apostles, and such as are authoriz'd by them. The Right of per-

* Mat. xxiv. 45. † Luke xii. 42.

forming the Priest's Office, in offering Sacrifice, hath been so appropriated by God to one Order of Men, that the Thoughts of usurping it without a regular Call, are sufficient to strike Terrour into the Hearts of all Men, who believe the Scripture to be the Word of God. And I know not whether the chief Reason that some Men have had to deny any proper Sacrifice in the *Christian* Church have not been this, that by allowing the Eucharist to be a Sacrifice, they should raise inexpressible Horrors in their own, or other Mens Consciences, for presuming to offer it without a proper Commission: Whereas, to preside in Prayer, and in a religious Feast (and such therefore they concluded the Eucharist to be) was an Office that Men might usurp without being hardened to such a Degree as *Saul* was, when he offer'd Sacrifice. (See *Disc. I. Sect. 33.*)

(2.) Another Abuse to be avoided is, Sect. 42. offering other Things, as Part of the Sacrifice, besides what * *Christ* hath ordain'd. Our Saviour when he speaks of Gifts at his Altar, does not, indeed, confine Men to bring Bread and Wine only, and no question any Thing may be presented there, that is necessary for the Support of the Clergy, the Poor, or of the Church, or Altar it self: But nothing is there to be of-

* Matt. v. 23.

fer'd by the Priest as a proper Sacrifice, save Bread and Wine only. It is in the highest degree probable, that the Bread offer'd by *Christ* was unleavened: For it is not to be supposed, that our Saviour would use leavened Bread at the Passover, because this was contrary to the express * Command of God; and there is just Reason to believe that the Wine, which he poured out before God, had a Mixture of Water, yet, we have not so good Authority for this as for the unleavened Bread: For we have it only from the *Jewish* Writings, which testify, that their Paschal Cup was diluted with Water, and the Cup thus mingled was still call'd *Wine*, or *the Fruit of the Vine*: And what adds to the Probability of it is, that the antient Church did generally, and, as I believe, perpetually mingle Water with the sacramental Wine. No Church or Congregation ought therefore to be condemn'd for choosing unleaven'd Bread, or Wine mingled with Water, rather than leaven'd Bread and mere Wine, for the *Christian* Sacrifice: Nor do I dare condemn any Church for omitting the Water, and adding the Leaven. Our Saviour's Practice either makes both Water and unleaven'd Bread, or neither of them necessary. The Leaven, or Yeast added in our Country, doth as much alter the Sub-

* Ex. xii. 15, 19.

stance of the Bread, as the Omission of the Water alters the Substance of the Cup. The *Greek Church* useth leavened Bread, and * declares, she does it in Opposition to the *Jews*, who keep their Feast with unleaven'd Bread: If she followed her own Rule, she must also lay aside the Water; because the *Jews* celebrate their Passover in a mingled Cup. The Tradition of the *Christian Church* is, indeed, stronger for the Water in the Wine, than for the unleaven'd Bread: But Scripture Proof without Tradition, is of more Weight than Tradition without Scripture. And the Use of unleavened Bread in the Passover, and therefore in the Eucharist, may certainly be prov'd from Scripture; but the Use of Water in the Cup, is owing wholly to Tradition; tho' it is true that it is a written Tradition, and attested by *Jews* as well as *Christians*. The *Jews* testify, that the Wine in their Passover was mingled with Water; and we know that our Saviour instituted the Sacrament in Wine left after the Paschal Feast; and *Christians* testify, that the *Christian Church* did usually celebrate the Sacrament in such a mingled Cup.

(3.) None of old were guilty of a more Sect. 43. gross Abuse of Sacrifice, than those Wretches who believed that God was be-

* See M. Blastar. Lit. i. c. 4. and Balsum. in Can. Ap. 70.

holden to them for their Sacrifices, that his Hunger, and his Thirst, was supplied by the Flesh, and Bread, and Wine, which was offer'd on his Table or Altar; and that, therefore, his enjoining them to offer these Materials, was only a specious Way of robbing their Flocks, Granaries, and Cellars. (See *Disc. I. Sect. 35.*) We shall too much resemble these Men in their Notions, if we ascribe any Merit to the mere outward Work of the *Christian* Sacrifice, as distinguish'd from the great Sacrifice offer'd by *Christ* in Person. None but senseless, or atheistical, scoffing *Jews* or *Gentiles*, could be guilty of the first Abuse just now mention'd: But it is to be fear'd, too many erroneous Christians are to answer for the other.

Sect. 44. (4.) But the most horrible Profanation of Sacrifice that *Christians* can commit, is the joining in it, while they remain impenitent in wilful Sin, or before they have actually reform'd it. The Apostle tells us how we are to *draw near to God* in this Ordinance, that is, *with Hearts sprinkled from an evil Conscience, and with Bodies washed with clean Water* *; that is, in short, with the inward Baptism as well as the outward. It hath already been observed (in *Disc. I. Sect. 36.*) that penitent Hearts and pious Dispositions

* Heb. x. 22,

were of old requir'd in all that offer'd Sacrifice; therefore *Job* sent and *sanctified his Sons* *, that is, he required them to humble themselves before God, for all the Excesses they had been guilty of in their free Way of living, before he offer'd Sacrifice for them. All the Washings, and other preparative Rites of the *Levitical Law*, were only Hints of those inward Purifications of our selves, that are necessary to qualify us for offering Sacrifice in a proper acceptable Manner: And even the *Heathen* themselves drove such as they esteem'd profane from their Altars. And shall we *Christians* come with less Awe and Reverence to offer Sacrifice to the only true God, than they did to their Idols? Our Sacrifice is indeed full of Power and Merit, tho' not from the Part we perform in it, yet from its Author, and from the original Sacrifice, from whence this takes its Being and Virtue. But the more holy and excellent our Sacrifice, the more pure and powerful the God to whom we offer it is, the greater ought our Care to be, that we do not approach them with filthy polluted Minds or Bodies. Our Sacrifice it self is all sufficient for the Supply of our spiritual Wants, but like the Author of it *separate from Sinners* †. None of its Power or Merits can touch a Soul defiled

* Job i. 5.

† Heb. vi. 27.

with wilful Guilt, and continuing impenitent under it. There is a figurative inward Sacrifice of a broken Heart, or bruised Spirit, necessary to be offer'd by all that have committed wilful Sin, before they presume to do their Parts in offering the Sacrifice of *Christ's* sacramental Body and Blood. One great End in offering the *Christian* Sacrifice is to obtain the Benefits of *Christ's* Redemption; and the first of these Benefits is the Pardon of our Sins: But sure no *Christian* can be ignorant, that Repentance is necessary to qualify us for the Application of this Pardon on our own Souls. How great soever the Worth and Dignity of our Sacrifice be, yet God will not take it in Exchange for our Duty, or as a Bribe to excuse us from Repentance, and a new Life. Our Saviour never intended by his Sacrifice to procure divine Favours for Sinners, till they actually amend. *Christ's* Altars were never design'd to be Sanctuaries for Criminals, or to yield Protection and Encouragement to Men that persist obstinately in their Vices. And we cannot offer a more vile Indignity to our God and Saviour, than to suppose, that he so far countenances Sinners, as to invite them to his Altars while they remain in their State of Uncleanness; or that he will, on Account of the Excellency of the Sacrifice, accept them

them with all their Vices. Whether evil Men are willing to hear it or not, it is as certain, that *Christ* says to them now, as that he will say to them at the last Day, *depart from me all ye Workers of Iniquity.*

(5.) The last Abuse of Sacrifice, is the exalting the Power of it in Prejudice to our other Duty, or Love to God and Man. I have already explained my self as to this particular, *Disc. I. Sect. 37.* but shall now farther observe, that none are fit to come to *Christ's* Sacrifice, but such as are carried to it by a sincere Love of God, and that carry along with them Hearts well affected toward all Men. These are the two great Commandments: And it will signify nothing to obey the Law of Sacrifice, unless we shew we have a true Love to God, by paying him due Obedience in all Respects to the best of our Power; and that we have a true Compassion and Charity for all Men, and even for our Enemies, according to the Example that *Christ* shew'd us in the great Sacrifice: For that was offer'd for all Men, even for those who *denied him* *, on Condition that they turn'd, and repented; and he died for no Sinners, but on this Condition. It is certain, that *Christ gave himself* [to God as a Sacrifice] *for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and*

Sect. 45.

* 2 Pet. ii. 1.

purify unto himself a peculiar People zealous of good Works *. If, therefore, we have not a Zeal for Piety and Holiness, we are none of his People. The Eucharist is a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving for the Redemption of the World by *Christ*: It is, therefore, the peculiar Right of those who are redeemed by him to offer this Sacrifice. What occasion hath the profane, the unclean, the intemperate, the unjust, the uncharitable *Christian*, to thank God for the Redemption of the World thro' *Jesus Christ*? It is certain, whatever *Christ* hath done, or suffer'd for Mankind, it shall be so far from yielding any Advantage, or Comfort to them who continue in Sin, that it will be a great Addition to their Misery; because they live and die in Rebellion, against that Light which *Christ Jesus* gives to the World. They can only, in good Sense, praise God for sending his Son to be a Sacrifice for Sin, who pursue the Ends of that Sacrifice by dying to Sin, and living to Righteousness; who shew themselves to be his redeemed purified People, by their Zeal for good Works.

Sect. 46.

(6.) You are not to wonder, that I have all along spoken of the People's offering the Sacrifice as well as the Priest's: For it is certain, that in the Generality of Sacrifices the People concurred, or joined with

* Tit. ii. 14.

the Priest in offering it to God. It was thus even under the Law: For it is said of the Lay-man, if his Offering be a burnt Sacrifice of the Herd, let him *offer* a Male, &c. * And when any Man will *offer* a Meal-offering, his Offering shall be of fine Flour, &c. If his Offering be a Sacrifice of Peace-offering, if he *offer* it of the Herd, he shall *offer* it without Blemish. The Priest indeed is the Principal, and to him the atoning Part is chiefly ascrib'd in all Sacrifices. But the Lay-man must be supposed to be perfectly stupid, if he did not go along with the Priest, in offering the Sacrifice in his own Behalf. God grant that *Christian* Priests and Laymen, may be so unanimous in this, and all other Parts of their Duty, that their Sacrifices and other Devotions may be acceptable to God, as in Days of old.

* Lev. i. 3. ii. 1. iii. 3.

The End of the second Discourse.

THE

T H E

Primitive Communicant

D I S C O U R S E III.

J O H N vi. 27.

*Labour not for the Meat which perisheth
but for the Meat, which endureth
everlasting Life, which the Son of
Man shall give you.*

I Have in the two former Discourses given an account of the nature of Sacrifice in general, and shew'd that the Eucharist, or Communion is a true proper Sacrifice. But I have hitherto spoken of the offering of this Sacrifice only. Now I proceed to speak of the consuming of it by eating, and drinking. I shall reduce what I have to say to the following Method, that is,

I. I shall shew, that the Meat spoken of in my Text, and in the remaining part of this Chapter, is the Bread in the Eucharist.

II. By what means the Bread and Cup in the Eucharist become *Christ's* Flesh and Blood.

Blood, and obtain the excellent Qualities ascribed to them by our Saviour in this Context.

III. How we ought to eat, and drink them.

I. The Meat here spoken of is the Bread Sect. 1.
in the Eucharist. There is no Room to doubt but the Meat is the same with the Bread, and the Flesh so often mention'd in the following Verses. He could not mean his natural Flesh: For it was impossible that could be eat by his Disciples, except they had been Savages. And when he speaks of drinking his Blood, he could not, for the same reason, mean his natural Blood. So long as they that heard our Saviour were *Jews*, tho' they had been Savages, they could not have ever been prevailed upon to drink real Blood, nor could it in reason be supposed that *Christ* required it. For nothing was more expressly forbidden them by the Law of God. When our Saviour took Bread and blessed it, and said, *Take Eat, this is my Body*, then he explained what he meant by promising his Flesh. When he *took the Cup*, and said *Drink ye all of this*, then he sufficiently expounded his intention in promising to give his Blood for Drink. And, if we will not allow our Saviour to be his own Interpreter in this Case, it is scarce to be thought that we shall see greater reason to do so in any other.

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Sect. 2.

The Phrases of *eating our Lord's Flesh, or Body*, and *drinking his Blood*, are very singular, and extraordinary; they were never used in a Religious Sense by the Founder of any Religion, but by our Saviour only, and he never appears to have used them but twice; first here in this Chapter, and then again when he offer'd the Sacrifice of our Redemption, and instituted the Eucharist, or Communion; they who will suppose that he did at these two several times intend the Phrases to be taken in two several Senses, must have very dishonorable thoughts of him; as if his Discourses were not consistent, or all of a piece, so that we cannot in any Case fix any certain determinate Sense upon his Words; or find out his Meaning at one Place by what he says at another. Sure never did any Master of Religion, whether true, or false, make one Expression, and that Expression peculiar to himself, and unheard of before, to have two distinct Significations. Yet this imputation they lay upon *Christ Jesus*, who would persuade Men that in this Chapter he meant one Thing by these Phrases, another in the Institution of the Communion.

Sect. 3.

The most prevailing Mistake concerning this matter is, that eating *Christ's Flesh*, and drinking his Blood, here in the 6th chapter of *St. John*, signifies no more than believing on him, or receiving his Doctrine. But

this

this I have justly call'd a Mistake. For in my Text *Believing* is the Work or Labour; but the *Meat* is the Wages, or Reward in Hand for that Labour. And certainly these two Things must be perfectly distinct from each other. That Faith, or Believing, is the *Work*, our Saviour expressly teaches us in ver. 29. *This is the Work of God, that ye believe in him whom he hath sent.* And the *Meat* is clearly his Flesh, or Body. No Man surely can imagine that the Labour, and the *Meat* is all one, or that Working, and Eating are the same Thing. So again Verse 35. *He that cometh to me, says Christ, shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.* Coming to, or believing in *Christ*, is clearly the Work, or Labour; the Reward, or Wages, is the *Meat*, the Flesh and Blood, which they that eat, and drink, shall never suffer famishing Hunger, or killing Thirst. Their Spiritual Wants shall all be supplied in this Heavenly Feast.

* *Solomon* in a figurative manner describes Wisdom as having kill'd her Beasts, mingled her Wine, furnish'd her Table, and as inviting her Guests in these Words, *Come eat of my Bread, and drink of the Wine that I have mingled*; yet by all this Entertainment, is meant only Doctrine, or Instruction. And several Writers by *Meat*

Sect. 41

* Pro. ix. 2,---5.

and

and Drink, Eating and Drink, have indeed meant no more than heark'ning to good Advice, and imbibing wholesome Precepts. But no Writer did ever speak of any Teacher, as saying to his Disciples, *eat My Flesh, drink My Blood*, excepting *Christ Jesus* only. And this Difference in the Words (tho' seemingly small) makes very great Odds in the Sense. And if an Instance could be produced of some other Master of Religion who had said, *eat my Flesh*, yet this would not come up to the present Case, unless it could be prov'd too, that this Master of Religion had instituted a Feast, which he called *the Feeding on his Body*, or *Flesh*: For our Saviour hath evidently enjoined his Disciples such a Feast; and it is therefore more just and natural to understand him here, as speaking of this Feast, than to suppose that he coin'd such a very singular Phrase, as does most properly denote that Feast, and yet was meant of quite another Thing.

Sect. 5. It is true, the Fault charged upon the loose Part of *Christ's* Hearers from first to last, is want of Faith. From hence some conclude, that all our Saviour meant by eating his Flesh and drinking his Blood, was believing his Doctrine: And it is certain, their Fault was entirely want of Faith; but it cannot from hence be concluded, that to eat *Christ's* Blood signifies believing,

believing, but rather, that they wanted a Faith strong enough to believe what *Christ* had told them here in this Chapter, concerning his feeding them with Bread from Heaven, which should endure to everlasting Life, that this Bread was his Flesh, and that this Flesh was fit for the Life or Maintenance of the whole World, and the like. 'Twas upon this *they strove*, the Question that stuck with them was this, *How this Man could give them his Flesh to eat.* ver. 51, 52. This was the *hard Saying* they complained of, ver. 60. 'Twas at this *they murmur'd, and were offended.* ver. 61. The plain Meaning of this last Word is, they stumbled into Unbelief: So that it was not for want of a general Faith in *Christ*, so much as of a particular Faith as to the Doctrine which *Christ* was now teaching them, that was the occasion of their falling off from him; the Doctrine I mean of the Necessity of eating his Flesh, and drinking his Blood. If *Christ's* Hearers had supposed that he taught them nothing now but what they had formerly heard, and that he had not added a new Article of Faith to those which he had at other times insisted on, there could be no Cause why they should leave him now any more than they did before.

It is incredible to suppose, that our Sa- sect. 6.
 our should express so plain and known
 a Thing

a Thing as Faith, or believing in him by so harsh and unagreeable a Phrase, as eating his Flesh and drinking his Blood, if he meant no more than receiving the Doctrine, which they had before been taught. Will any *Christian* say, or can he think that our blessed Lord would willingly offend great Numbers of Men to such a Degree as to make them desert him, and shake the Faith even of his Apostles, by using very dark, and perfectly new Ways of Expression, and forbearing fully and directly to explain himself? It was certainly unworthy of our Blessed Master, to stagger his Hearers with obscure Phrases which carried a Sound of what was perfectly unnatural, when he meant nothing but what was easy and obvious. Therefore, I take it for certain, that he spoke in this Manner, because this was the most proper Way of Speaking. He was treating of a great and most sublime Mystery and this Mystery could not be justly expressed in other Words than those, which he therefore used.

Sect. 7.

If it be said that the new Article of Faith now taught them by *Christ*, was that they must believe in a crucified Saviour, and that this was what *Christ* meant when he declared the Necessity of eating his Flesh, and drinking his Blood, the Difficulty will not be much lessened.

this Means : For to say that we eat *Christ's* Flesh and drink his Blood, by believing the Power and Efficacy of his Death, is to say, that *Christ* express'd himself in a very singular and harsh Manner, and yet did never expound his own Meaning. And in this Case too, there will be no Difference between the Work and the Meat : For, if to eat his Flesh, and to drink his Blood, is to believe in him as crucified, then to work and to eat, the Faith and the Meat, are the same Thing : But *Christ* plainly distinguishes between these in my Text, as was observed, *Sect. 3.* It is farther observable, that not only *Christ's* loose Followers, but his own Apostles, all the twelve, were very much shock'd with this Discourse of his, insomuch that he saw occasion to say to them, *Will ye also go away?* ver. 67. But the Death of *Christ* could be no Secret to them, however not to those who had been *John Baptist's* Disciples : For they first believed in *Christ* under that Character given him by *John*, that he was *the Lamb of God, who was to take away the Sins of the World**, and therefore, certainly to be slain as a Sacrifice for Sin. But this Doctrine of eating his Flesh, and drinking his Blood, was new and surprizing, even to them as well as to others. Some of them must know,

* John i. 29, 36, &c.

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that

that he was to die as a Sacrifice for Sin, yet these, as well as the rest, were utter Strangers to the Doctrine of the Sacrament, which he was now teaching them.

Sect. 8.

As I am fully convinced by the Force of our Saviour's Words in this Chapter, that he intended what he said to be understood of the Communion of his Body and Blood, so I am confirmed in this Opinion by the general * Consent of the antient Fathers, and the Primitive Church in this Point. And I am persuaded, that the first real Occasion of taking our Saviour in another Sense, and that a very wrong One, was really this: The Pope having wickedly deprived the People of the Cup in the Communion, found it necessary to employ his Divines to contrive some new Gloss on this Context. The forbidding the Cup to the Laity, stood expressly condemn'd by our Saviour, *ver. 53. except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and DRINK HIS Blood, ye have no Life in you.* So long as this was understood of the Eucharist, the Practice of the Church of Rome could not be defended, or even palliated. Therefore, they found it necessary to hammer out some new Notions on this whole Discourse of *Christ Jesus*. And the Majority of the *Romish* Divines, in the

* See Unbl. Sacr. Part. I. p. 354.—390. And St. *Austin* de Consensu Evangelistarum. L. 3. c. i.

Council of *Trent*, as long before, countenanced these loose Notions, and carried it against the more judicious Part of that Assembly. The most Antient *Protestants* did affirm that this Context in *John vi.* was meant of the Eucharist; but *Luther*, and *Calvin*, with their Followers, whose Doctrine of the Eucharist was perfectly New, tho' they did not agree in other Points, yet fell in with each other, and with the stream of the *Popish* Divines as to this particular; tho' their Motives thus to interpret this Context, were very different from those which inclin'd the *Popish* Divines this way. Yet the Learned * *Poynt*, Bishop of *Winchester* here in *England*, in the reign of King *Edward 6.* gave not only his Testimony to this Truth, that our Saviour in this place speaks of the Eucharist, but his Authorities from the best antient Writers, and declares that "they are not to be regarded who deny it, in Opposition to so great a Cloud of Witnesses." To which Sentiment of his I readily subscribe.

II. I proceed to shew by what means the Bread and Cup, in the Communion, become *Christ's* Flesh and Blood, and attain those excellent Properties ascribed to them in this Chapter, by our blessed Saviour.

Now this is to be learned principally Sect. 9.
from the History of the Institution of

* See Unbl. Sacrif. page 429.

the Sacrament, as it is briefly recorded by St. *Matthew* Chap. xxvi. from the 26. to the 28. Verse, by St. *Mark* Chap. xiv. from the 22. to the 24. Verse, by St. *Luke* Chapter xxii. Verse 19, 20. and St. *Paul*, 1 Cor. xi. from 23. to the 26 Verse. St. *Luke* tells us, *Christ took Bread and gave Thanks*; so doth St. *Paul*; St. *Matthew*, and St. *Mark*, instead of *giving Thanks*, say, *be Blessed it*. From this, it may fairly be concluded, that the Greek Word used by St. *Luke*, and St. *Paul*, tho' turn'd in our Translation, as well as others, *giving Thanks*, yet implies a real Blessing imparted to the Bread. In like manner our Saviour having taken the Cup is said to have *given Thanks* by St. *Matthew*, and St. *Mark*; yet St. *Paul* calls it * *the Cup of Blessing, which we Bless*. And this I take to be a Demonstration, that the Actions on this occasion, performed by our Blessed Saviour over the Bread and Wine, had their final Effects on those Creatures, or Symbols; or that by his Devotion address'd to God the Father, he procured the divine Benediction to descend upon them. But I shall give the full Import of this *giving Thanks*, or *eucharistizing*, as I should choole with the Antients to call it, if it were not too hard a Word to be used in a Discourse of this Nature.

* 1 Cor. x. 16.

It is allowed on all hands, that our Saviour did on this occasion give Thanks. Sect. 10.
 This cannot be denied. What is said next above sufficiently proves this. For the *Greek Word*, here used, does certainly import thus much ; but it imports something more too. It is of the same signification with the *English Word Blessing*, which denotes both praising God, and performing some religious Office toward his Creatures. Here each Word hath both these Senses. The *Jews* used to bless the Wine at the Paschal Feast, three or four several Times, by saying over it, "Blessed be thou, O Lord, our God, and King, who createst the Fruit of the Vine," or else some part of Psalm cxxxvi, or cxlv. Our Saviour, before he enter'd upon the Exercise of his Priestly Office, in consecrating the Eucharist, took the Paschal * *Cup*, and gave thanks, and said, *Take this, and divide it among your selves*. Therefore he had blessed the Cup in the *Jewish* manner, before he began to institute the Sacrament. It seems highly unreasonable to suppose, that our Saviour made no difference in his Blessing of the Cup at the end of the Passover, and that in the Communion. No doubt but the Words, in which he gave Thanks in the Communion, were such as fitted the present Occasion ; particularly that he praised God

* Luke xxii. 17.

for sending him into the World for the Redemption of Men. And the Primitive Church did sufficiently express her Sentiment in this Point, by beginning the Communion-office with those excellent Words, which still shine in our English Liturgy, viz. *Lift up your Hearts, &c. It is very meet, right, and our bounden Duty, that we should at all times give Thanks, &c.* and then followed a large Recital of God's gracious Providences toward Mankind, especially to his Church, and above all in the Redemption of the World by *Jesus Christ*.

Sect 11.

But this giving Thanks, or Blessing, implies some what more still; it implies something done, in relation to the Bread and Wine. Praising God over them does not so directly import any Blessing conferr'd to those Creatures. *St. Matthew*, and *St. Mark* say expressly, *he blessed the Bread*. *St. Paul* calls the Wine in the Communion, *the Cup which we bless*. And the other Word rendered *giving Thanks*, carries the same signification with it, as hath been already observed. And

1. Both the Elements were blessed by being appointed to represent his Body and Blood: for whatever was assign'd, or separated, for so sacred and religious a Purpose, might justly be esteem'd to be Blessed, or Consecrated. *Why doth one Day excell another*, says *Ecclesiasticus*, * *when all the light*

* *Ecclus.*
xxxiii. 7, 9.

light of every day in the year is of the sun? the answer is, God hath made some high-days. and hallowed them, and some of them he hath made ordinary days. So all Bread is of Wheat, or Corn, and all Wine of the Juice of the Grape, and therefore of the same Nature; yet what was taken out of the common Mass, for so great and holy an Use, as to represent *Christ's* Body and Blood, was thereby advanced, and exalted above, and beyond all the Bread and Wine then in the Universe; and was thereby sanctify'd, or nobly distinguish'd from all Materials of the same sort. *Christian* Priests do this, when, in rehearsing the Words of Institution, they point out that part of the Bread and Wine which is design'd for this sacred Purpose, of being the Deputies of *Christ's* Body and Blood.

(2.) It hath been shew'd in the second Sect. 12.
Discourse, Sect. 6. and so on to the 9th, that *Christ* offer'd the Bread and Wine to God the Father, as the Pledge, Earnest, and Representatives of his Body and Blood: and that in doing this he accomplish'd the Sacrifice of our Redemption. But now whatever had been offer'd in Sacrifice was ever, by all People, esteem'd Holy in a peculiar manner. Every Meal-offering, and Offering for Sin, was by God in the *Levitical* Law declared to be *most Holy*, or consecrated

secrated in a manner beyond all other Sacrifices whatsoever. (*See first Discourse, Sect. 9.*) And why every Meal-offering should be *most Holy*, though all bloody Sacrifices were not so, it will be hard to assign any other Reason but this, *viz.* that the *Levitical* Meal-offering was the special Type of the *Christian* Sacrifice. And for the same Reason, I conceive, the Meal-offering was also honour'd with the Title of *the Bread, or Food of God*; (*See first Discourse, Sect. 25.*) as no bloody Sacrifices were, except those for Sin, or Trespas. It is for this Reason that *Christ* calls himself *the Bread of God*, in the 33d ver. of this Chapter, from whence I have taken my Text, because he was to be a Sacrifice for Sin, and was to offer this Sacrifice under the Symbols of Bread and Wine. For nothing is in Scripture ever called the Bread of God but either a Meal-offering, or an Offering for Sin and Trespas. And it is observable that our Saviour throughout this Chapter calls the Sacrifice which he was to offer, and with which he was to feed his Disciples, he calls it, I say, promiscuously, *I, ME, my FLESH, and BLOOD, or MEAT, BREAD, BREAD of GOD*; by which we are to understand, that the Bread and Wine are the same with Himself, or with His Body and Blood, in Mystery, though not in Substance.

(3.) God the Father, in Token of his Acceptance of the Sacrifice, gave it yet a farther, and higher Benediction, a Consecration from the Divine Spirit, the Fountain of all Holiness. No Christian can doubt of the Acceptance of the Sacrifice. As of old Sacrifices were burnt by a Fire from Heaven, to shew that God graciously receiv'd what was offer'd him; (*See first Discourse, Sect. 22.*) so the most proper way for God to accept the most excellent Sacrifice, that was ever offer'd, was to cause the Holy Spirit to shed its Rays upon it, not in order to consume it, but thereby to give it the highest Degree of Sanctity, and Benediction, that any Sacrifice is capable of receiving. And this is what our Saviour *Christ* declares in these words, ver. 53. *It is the spirit that quickneth, or giveth Life, and Power to the Sacrament. The Flesh, or sacramental Body of it self profiteth nothing. The words which I speak, or the Promises which I pronounce, are not only material visible things, but they are Spirit, and they are Life.* The outward Signs are full of inward Grace. So the Antients understood that Text; and the Apostle seems clearly to speak of the Cup in the Sacrament, and of the Communicants receiving it, when he says, **We have all been made to drink into the same*

* 1 Cor. xii. 13.

Spirit.

Spirit. And the Primitive Church, in full Confidence of this Truth, did always, after the Symbols had been offer'd as a Sacrifice to God, pray to him to accept of the Oblation, and look favourably on the Gifts, and cause the Holy Spirit to descend on them: And by virtue of the Consecration thus finish'd by the special presence of the Spirit, the Eucharist was also esteem'd a spiritual Sacrifice, as well as on another Account mention'd in the second *Discourse* *Sect.* 40. And the Sacrifice being thus consecrated was too holy a Thing to be treated as the Sacrifices of the Antients were, that is, to be laid on the Fire in whole, or in part; but was entirely to be consumed in the most honourable manner that is, be wholly eat and drank, by faithful People, in an Act of most solemn Devotion.

Sect. 14.

And it was the universal Belief of the Antients, that, by the special Presence of the Holy Spirit, the Bread and Wine were made the Body and Blood of *Christ*, in Life and Power, as they were before in Figure or Representation. As the natural Body of *Christ* was formed in the Womb by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, so they expected, and pray'd, that, by the Operation of the same Spirit, the Bread and Wine might be made the Body and Blood, in a more effectual manner than they

were

were, when offer'd to God as mere Representatives: And it was their certain Belief that the Bread, thus consecrated by the secret Influence of the Spirit was the very Body of *Christ* in Power, and Energy, and to all Intents and Purposes of Religion, and so far as it was possible for one thing to be made another, without change of Substance. This was indeed no Article of their Creed, because the Creed was originally drawn not for Communicants, but to be rehears'd by Persons that were to be baptiz'd, or their Sureties. But it was an Article to which all Communicants gave their Consent so oft as they receiv'd. For the Priest of old said, at the delivery of the Bread to every single Communicant, *The Body of Christ*: And every Communicant answer'd *Amen*; by which he was understood to give his Consent to what the Priest said. And in the same manner they acknowledge the sacramental Wine to be the Blood of *Christ*. The Primitive Church believed not any Change of Substance in the Sacrament. For they ever affirmed the Bread and Wine to remain after Consecration; but that by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost they were *Christ's* Body and Blood, not only by way of Type, or Figure, but in real Power and Effect.

And

Sect. 15.

And we are to observe that, in the Institution *Christ* says of the Bread, *This is my Body*; of the Cup, or Wine, *This is my Blood*, without adding any Words to abate the Signification of that Expression. He calls the sacramental Bread *my Flesh*, five times in six Verses in this Chapter, from which I take my Text, beginning at verse 51, ending at verse 56: Nay, he calls *My Flesh, which I will give for the life of the World*, verse 51. And it appears under this Pledge of Bread he did actually offer his Body to the Father for the Redemption of Mankind. See *Sect. 6.* and so on to the 9th, *Discourse ii.* And he calls the Cup, or Wine, *his Blood*, four times within the Compass of four Verses, beginning at the 53d, ending at the 56th. He knew full well what captious Hearers he had, and that they were upon the point of deserting him on this account; yet he does not forbear to speak the Mystery, as that Mystery deserv'd. *St. Paul* * tells them that unworthily receiv'd the Sacrament, that *they were guilty of the body, and blood of the Lord*; and the same Apostle says of the Cup, that *it is the Communion of the blood of Christ*; and of the Bread, that *it is the Communion of the body of Christ*, without any mollifying Addition. We are not therefore to wonder that the

* 1 Cor. xi. 27. 1 Cor. x. 16.

Primitive Church made this an Article of Faith, though not of their Creed.

And the consecrated Bread and Wine being thus, by the secret Operation of the Holy Spirit, made the Body and Blood of *Christ*, did fully answer the Characters which *Christ* gives us of his Flesh and Blood in this 6th chap. of St. *John's* Gospel. When the *Jews* upbraid *Christ* for not feeding them with Manna, or Bread from Heaven, as *Moses* by the divine Power had fed their Ancestors, he replies v. 32. *Moses gave you not that Bread from Heaven*, which best deserves that Name; he gave you not my Sacramental Flesh; *but my Father is now about to give you the true Bread from Heaven*. He calls his Sacramental Flesh *Bread from Heaven*, for the same reason that his Natural Flesh might so be called; because both became what they were by the Power from on High, the Operation of the Holy Spirit, as hath before been hinted Sect. 14. If the Baptism of *John* were from Heaven, much more the Sacraments of the Gospel. Another Character which *Christ* gives of his Sacramental Flesh and Blood is, that it endures (in its Effects at least) to everlasting Life, ver. 27. that it is the *Bread of Life*, or, *which giveth Life unto the World*, ver. 33, 35, 48. such *Bread*, that a Man may eat, or rather feed thereon, and not die, ver. 50. but be raised up at the last Day to a happy Immor-

Sect. 16.

Mat. xxi. 25.

Immortality, *and never die the Death of a Sinner*, v. 51. 54. and that therefore this *Flesh is true Meat*, this *Blood, true Drink*, v. 55. By all this, I conceive, our Saviour gives, and repeats to us his Promise, that his Sacramental *Flesh and Blood* shall be the most proper and efficacious means, to raise, and preserve in us, all the Virtues of the Christian Life; that they shall be to us Channels of divine Grace, and convey to us the Principles of a happy Resurrection, and of eternal Life. Another Quality of this Meat and Drink is, that he that duly uses it, in the Words of our Saviour, *dwelleth in me, and I in him*, ver. 56. There is the most perfect Agreement, Friendship, and Union, betwixt Christ and such a Man; therefore such a Man can *never hunger or thirst*, as it is in ver. 35. he cannot labour under spiritual Wants, being so richly provided by this Religious Feast.

Sect. 17.

And the Case is very plain that the Holy Sacrament being a Feast upon a Sacrifice, a Feast upon the Sacrifice of *Christ Jesus*, all the Effects and Merits of that all sufficient Sacrifice are applied to those who duly communicate in this sacred Feast. As therefore Pardon of Sin, divine Grace, and everlasting Happiness, are the Ends, for which the Sacrifice of *Christ* and the *Church* were, and are offer'd; so *Christ*, by making all his sincere Disciples invited Guests at this

this Feast upon his Sacrifice, does thereby make them Partakers of all those Privileges now mention'd. And it is evident beyond all doubt, that they who, according to the prescribed Rules do offer, and join in feasting upon, any Sacrifice offer'd by God's Appointment, are thereby received into full Communion with God, and may depend upon him for the fulfilling his Covenant. Since therefore Forgiveness of Sin, God's Grace, and endless Happiness, are the Articles by the Covenant established thro' the Sacrifice of *Christ* to be granted to all, who take hold of this Covenant in the Way directed by him, that is, by eating his Flesh and drinking his Blood; it is evident that they who comply with these Terms, are entitled to those great and glorious Promises, are in all Respects one with him, and can have no Religious Wants to complain of.

See Disc. I.
Sect. 16,
17, 18.

It is very easy and obvious to object against what is here laid down, that Pardon of Sin, and divine Grace, and eternal Life, are Rewards too great to be given to Men, merely for eating and drinking the Sacrament; and it is chiefly on this account that some great Men among the *Protestants* have been willing to have this whole Context understood of any thing rather than of eating and drinking *Christ's* Flesh and Blood, in a Sacramental manner. And it must be confess'd to be very unreasonable to suppose, that

Sect. 19.

that *Christ* should annex all the Blessings and Privileges of the Gospel to a mere external Action: It must be own'd that nothing can be more contrary to the main Tenor of the Gospel, than to suppose, that a Man, by eating with his Fellow-Christians, should give himself a Right to all the Promises of God in his Son *Christ Jesus*. But then it is to be remembred, that the Eucharistical Bread is here spoken of by our Saviour, as the *Bread of God*, v. 33. that is as a Sacrifice, and that for this reason Men ought to come to it with penitent Hearts and pious Dispositions. For this was ever a Law of Sacrifice. See *Disc. ii. Sect. 38. 44, 45.* and *Disc. iii. Sect. 12.* And farther our Saviour has prevented the force of this Objection in the very first words of his Discourse on this Subject, I mean in the words of my Text; for he declares that *we must labour for that Meat that endureth to everlasting Life*: And when his Hearers ask'd him what this Work or Labour was which was requir'd of them, his Answer was, *they should believe in Him whom God had sent*. It is therefore evident that Faith in *Christ Jesus*, and his Gospel, or a sincere Consent to all the Doctrines preached by him, is a Condition necessary to the receiving *Christ's* Flesh and Blood. By explaining this, I shall say all that need be said to shew,

III. How we ought to eat *Christ's* Flesh, and drink his Blood, in the holy Communion: and here,

1st, There is one Condition, without Sect. 19. which no Man can have a just Right, or Claim, to this sacred Meat, as hath been just before hinted; and this is a sincere Belief in *Christ Jesus* as sent by God. They who affirm eating and drinking the Body and Blood of *Christ*, to signify nothing but Faith in him as crucified for us, must by Consequence allow, that all the great Promises of eternal Life, Union with *Christ*, and spiritual Satisfaction, as they were particularly explained in Sect. 16. of this *Discourse*, do belong to those who do believe; therefore with much better reason may it be asserted, that they belong to those who not only believe, but, in consequence of their Faith, do comply with this great Institution of *Christ*. And from this it appears, that it is not barely an external eating, or feeding on the Sacrament, to which our Saviour hath promised all these Blessings; but to them who by a sincere Faith have qualified themselves for the outward Action, and for the inward Grace. As Labour does not only entitle Men to Wages, but quickens the Appetite, and strengthens the Digestion of the Meat thereby earn'd; so Faith not only is the Condition necessary in order to obtaining

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the Benefit of the Sacrament, but is likewise a proper Means to raise our Desires toward the Sacrament, and also to make the Use of it effectual to the Ends intended.

Sect. 20. This is especially true, if we consider Faith with a particular regard to that Doctrine, concerning the Sacrament, deliver'd by Christ in this Chapter. For he who by the Eye of Faith discerns the Body and Blood of his Redeemer, and receives them as given to God for the Sins of Men, (not in Substance, but Mystery) will certainly take heed that he don't pass any Contempt or Profanation upon such sacred Things, either by receiving them while he is in a State of Sin, or by committing any Indecency in his outward Behaviour, while he is performing so holy and solemn an Action. The Apostle assures us, that *he who eats and drinks the Mysteries unworthily, eats and drinks Damnation to himself**; and he hints the Reason of this in the next Words, namely, because *he discerns not the Lord's Body*; that is, he wants that Faith, or Belief of our Saviour's Words, whereby he ought to be assured that the Bread is *Christ's Flesh*, and the Wine his Blood, to all Intents and Purposes of Religion. It is true, the Apostle by unworthy receiving in this Place, does

* 1 Cor. xi. 29.

particularly mean quarrelling, drawing Sides, or making Divisions among themselves, and being actually *drunk**, or under the Effects of some lesser Degrees of Intemperance, at the Place and Time of receiving. But the Reason there given why such Men as these were condemned, extends to all that come to the Sacrament, while they are under the Dominion of any Sin: For certainly he, who discerns the Lord's Body there to be received, will see just Cause to beware of all Sins as well as those there mentioned. It is true, the Sins there mention'd were more visible, and therefore more scandalous, than many others. But it is unworthy of the Apostle to suppose, that he reprehended those Sins only on account of the outward Offence given to Men: For it is the inward Filth, and Defilement of wilful Sin, that makes it damnable, much more than the outward Scandal. Our Saviour particularly requires every Disciple of his to be reconciled to his Brother, when he brings his Gifts to the Altar †; that is, to be free from all injurious Practices or Designs toward other Men: And charges him, that if he remember ought that his Brother hath against him, he should not offer his Gift, tho' he had it ready to present at the Altar. Now certainly any other wil-

* 1 Cor. xi. 18. 21.

† Mat. v. 23.

ful Crime ought to be esteemed as just an Obstruction to the making our Offering at God's Altar, as an Injury done to another Man. Therefore, whoever comes to the Sacrament with a discerning Faith, will be as much afraid of coming to it under the unrepented Guilt of any known Sin, as in the Commission of those two mentioned by the Apostle. It is true, the Undecency of quarrelling, and Intemperance, at the Time and Place of receiving, were an Aggravation of the Fault: But Guilt is certainly more odious in the Sight of God, than any Indecency considered abstractedly, or apart from that Guilt.

Sect. 21. Yet great Regard is likewise to be had of external Decency in receiving. The *Levitical Law* was very precise in determining the Manner of eating the Remainder of Sacrifices, as may be seen *Sect.* 25, 26. And it will there also appear, that the Success of the Sacrifice did much depend upon observing these Rules. Much greater Reason have *Christians* to avoid any unbecoming Actions, Words, and even Thoughts, while they are entertaining themselves at so sacred a Feast; and not to indulge themselves in any Motions or Postures that shew a want of Reverence and Devotion.

As Faith in *Christ*, taken in its widest Sense, is a purifying Grace; so a Belief of what *Christ* and his Apostles have taught us, concerning this Sacrament in particular, is very proper to raise and improve all *Christian* Virtues and Dispositions in our Minds. For he who is under a full Persuasion, that, by taking the Sacrament, he receives *Christ's* Body and Blood, tho' not in a natural, yet in a spiritual and mysterious manner, and that we are to do it to this End, that we may be one with *Christ*, or that he and we may mutually dwell with each other, will not only take care to banish every thing from his Mind, and Body, that may be distasteful and offensive to so great a Guest; but will also endeavour to furnish himself with all those inward Ornaments of the Mind, which he knows to be most agreeable to him, and will soon, before, at, or after receiving the Sacrament, take all possible Opportunities of exercising those Duties, which he knows to be most acceptable to his Lord and Saviour; or if he want Opportunities for some of them, yet he will, in his Devotions, solemnly declare his Readiness to obey his God and Redeemer in those Points, whenever a just Occasion shall offer itself, and he has Power to use it. A good Communicant ought to rejoice at any proper Opportunity of expressing his Love

to God or Man, his Humility, Self-denial, and other Virtues, because he knows that these are the Qualities that best become those who are engaged in so holy a Service, and who expect the Enjoyment of those Blessings, which are in this Chapter ensured to faithful Receivers.

Sect. 23.

As the first Care of a Communicant ought to be, that his Heart be well affected to God, so he should consider that God accepts our Good-will to our Fellow Creatures as a Proof of our Love to him. If there be some Virtues which we cannot put in actual Practice at the Communion, yet there is one, which, if we are able, we shall never want Opportunity of exercising, I mean Alms-deed. The Primitive Church maintained the Bishops, Clergy, and Poor, out of the voluntary Offerings made by the People at the Altar. All these have now among us a settled, legal Provision. Yet the Poor (to say nothing at present of the Clergy) notwithstanding the Care taken by the Law, have Wants which we may hear and see. The Primitive Way of supplying them is by converting our Alms into Offerings, and rendering our Devotions to God a Supply for the Necessities of Men. It is contrary to the Practice of God's People in all Ages to appear empty-handed before the Lord. *Christ* supposes that his Disciple will not appear

appear at the Altar without his Gift *, or Offering. The first *Christians* were so liberal in this Point, that their Contributions at the Communion served for the Maintenance of the Poor in other Churches, that were oppress'd with Famine, or publick Calamities, as well as of that where they were made. St. Paul tells us of his bringing such Alms and Offerings from other Churches to his own Country of *Judea* †. And even in the Ages long before *Christ*, generous Men, when they offer'd Sacrifice, made large Provisions for the decent Entertainment of others. See *Disc. I. Sect. 23.*

As it is necessary that, in order to render ourselves good Communicants, we should enter into a strict Examination of our own Hearts, that so we may discover all our wilful Sins, and humble ourselves under the Hand of God, and resolve to avoid them for the future; so it is likewise necessary on another account, namely, that we may likewise discern our own good Dispositions, and Growth in Virtue. By being blind to our own good Deeds and Graces, we ourselves lose the Comfort, and God loseth the Glory of them. It is our Duty, when we have done well, to have *a rejoicing in ourselves* ||, as it is, when we have done ill, to afflict our

Sect. 24.

* Mat. v. 23. † Acts xxiv. 17. || Gal. vi. 4.

Souls, and to be revenged on ourselves for our Folly and Presumption. In this Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, next to the Redemption of the World by *Christ Jesus*, there is nothing for which we can more seasonably praise God, than for calling us to the Knowledge of his Gospel, and to be Members of his Church, and for our personal Improvement of these great Mercies. There is no Incense more fit to perfume our other Devotions than a just Perception of the Power of God's Grace, in enabling us to overcome any strong Temptation, and especially any rooted Habit of Vice. Next to the Sacrifice of the *Christian* Church, there is no Oblation more acceptable to God than a Lust, or Passion, well conquered and mortified: And he is the happiest Man, who either never was under the Dominion of any Sin, or who hath at last shaken that Yoke off his Neck, and can now with an humble Triumph offer up his Trophies and Atchievements at God's Altar; acknowledging, at the same time, that from thence he received such Supplies and Recruits of Divine Grace, during the Conflict, as at last gain'd him the Victory. And he best pursues the Ends of the great Sacrifice of *Christ*, and is therefore the best Communicant, who, as often as he comes to the Altar to remember *Christ's* bearing our Sins in his own

own Body on the Tree *, endeavours to be conformable to him in dying to Sin, and living unto Righteousness.

But let no *Christian* deceive himself, as Sect. 25, if these inward Graces, and holy Dispositions of Mind, were the real Sacrifice, which is to be offer'd in the *Christian* Church, when they are in truth only the Decorations, or Embellishments, or proper Dress of those who are to join in the offering of it. The real Sacrifice is the Bread and Wine offer'd on God's Altar, and sanctified by the Divine Spirit, and then eat and drank by the Priests and People. *The Flesh of the Sacrifice of Peace-offering for Thanksgiving, (says Moses) shall be eaten the same Day it is offered †: And again, When ye will offer a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, on the same Day it shall be eaten ||.* These Texts sufficiently prove, that a Sacrifice of Thanks in the Scripture-Notion is some substantial Thing fit to make a Feast of. See *Disc. I. Sect. 21, 41.* Words and Thoughts are too thin in their Nature to make a real proper Sacrifice.

I must farther add, that *Christ* hath annexed these great Privileges to the due receiving of this Sacrament, on Condition we do it not once, or twice, or very rarely, but very frequently, or as oft as we have Opportunity. This is evident from Sect. 26,

* 1 Pet. ii. 24. † Lev. vii. 15. || xxii. 29.

the whole Context. The Chapter begins with a Narrative of our Saviour's feeding a great Multitude of *Jews* with five Barley-loaves and two small Fishes. They were so affected with this, that they designed to take him by force, and make him their King; *ver. 15.* For they thought him a fit Person to head an Army against the *Romans*, who could subsist an Army by Miracles. Our Saviour withdraws himself into a lonesome Mountain, and in the Night crosses the Sea of *Tiberias* with his Apostles, in order to defeat the Intentions of the Multitude. Yet many of them next Day pursue, and find him. He tells them, they follow him for the sake of the Loaves, *ver. 26.* And they confirm this Saying of our Saviour, by presently reminding him of their Fathers being fed with Manna in the Wilderness; and they were not fed for once, and away, as themselves had now been with the Loaves and Fishes, but for forty Years together. It is evident therefore, they followed our Saviour in expectation of constant Maintenance, and they themselves speak this plainly enough, when they say, *Lord, evermore give us this Bread*, *ver. 34.* It is clear, they hoped to live at the Expence of our Saviour's Miracles, not only for a Day or two, but for a Constancy; therefore when the People say, *Our Fathers did eat Manna in*
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the Desert, ver. 31. their Meaning was, Manna was their constant Food. And our Saviour himself by *eating* must also intend a constant feeding, when he says, *Your Fathers did eat Manna in the Wilderness*, &c. ver. 49. When therefore in the next Verse, and in several other Places of this Chapter, he speaks of eating the Bread from Heaven, or his Flesh, we ought to take him in the same Sense, as designing thereby to let us know, that it was not any occasional eating, but a constant feeding on his sacramental Flesh, to which he had promised such great Privileges. And certainly no Man can think it unreasonable, that he who by the Work of Faith hath earn'd this spiritual Meat, and never omits an Opportunity of eating it, with such Affections and Dispositions of Mind as so heavenly an Entertainment requires, should have a Right to all the Blessings and Promises of the Gospel.

The Apostolical Church continued Sect. 27. steadfastly, and even daily, in *breaking of Bread**. The Primitive Church, for several hundred Years, called it the *Daily Oblation*, and offered and received it as such. Such *Christians* as lived in remote Places of the Country, and could not therefore attend the holy Sacrifice every Day, yet never willingly omitted it once

* Acts ii. 42, 46.

a Week, and particularly on the Lord's Day. And even in the fourth Century, that Layman, who omitted the receiving of the Sacrament for three Lord's Days together, was laid under a Sentence of Excommunication. And as for the Clergy, they were obliged to assist at the daily Ministration of it. There were then three Ranks of Laymen, that is, Catechumens, who attended the Sermons of the Church, and shewed a good Inclination to *Christianity*, but were not yet baptized; the Penitents, who had been baptized, and admitted to the Communion, but had been guilty of some Crime, for which they were obliged to Penance, and, during that Time, to abstain from the Eucharist; and lastly, the Faithful, or Communicants: There was then no such Rank of Laymen as the generality now are among us, I mean, such as have been baptized, and yet are neither Penitents, nor Communicants.

Sect. 28. From what hath been just now said it is evident, that the Eucharist is the proper, solemn Worship of *Christians*. Our Saviour clearly intended it as such. He never instituted any other publick, joint Devotion, or Service of God; and this he intended to be the perpetual constant Sacrifice of his Church. Prayer is a Duty of natural Religion, used in all Ages, and

and Places, and tho' he hath given us better Directions and Instructions for Prayer, than were ever given by any before, yet he cannot be said to be the first that taught Men to pray to God. But the Eucharist is entirely of his Foundation: And he clearly founded it as the constant, settled Worship of his People gathered together in his Name. If there were in the Primitive Church any publick Assemblies for the Worship of God, without the Celebration of the Eucharist, (which is not certain) yet we are sure that the Eucharist was the principal and daily Service of the antient *Christians*; and in and by this Sacrifice they offered all their most important Prayers and Intercessions to Almighty God. And then they did most properly pray in the Name of *Christ*, when they put up their Petitions at the Throne of Grace, with the Sacramental Body and Blood of *Christ* placed before God upon the Altar.

It is therefore to be considered, and Sect. 29.
practised, to be offered, eat, and drank, as the one publick Sacrifice, and common Feast of the *Christian Church*, not as the private, singular Devotion of any one, or of a few Men, or of some particular Congregations. For it deserves our Observation, that all Spiritual Privileges belong to us, not in our own personal Capacities, but
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as we are Members of the one Body. No *Christian* ought to put too much Confidence in his own separate Devotions, but to expect all spiritual Blessings in common with his Brethren, and by virtue of *Christ's* publick Institutions. We are called to *Peace*, and therefore called in one Body*. It was the Church which *Christ* purchased with his Blood; this is that Body, of which he is the Head and Saviour, and which he fills with his Graces. Therefore he hath annexed all divine Favours and Mercies to his Church assembled together to fulfil his Will, and sacred Institutions, not to single Persons, as separated from others.

Sect. 30. This shews how just and rational the Zeal of all sound and well instructed *Christians* is, and ever was, for maintaining the publick Worship, and for joining in it, even at the Hazard of their Lives. This they learn'd from *Christ Jesus*, who expressly told his Hearers, *Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his Blood, ye have no Life in you*, ver. 53. And it is evident from what hath been said, and from the Practice of the antient Church, that as this Eating and Drinking ought to be very frequent, so it is to be performed by the joint Assembly of Priests and People under their Care, and as a publick Ordinance of

* Col. iii. 15. Acts xx. 28. Eph. i. 23. — v. 23.

the *Christian* Church. It was principally by this means that *Christ* intended to preserve his Disciples consolidated together as a Rock. They who take a pleasure in vilifying the Primitive *Christians*, think this a considerable Objection against them, that they shewed an invincible Zeal in keeping up their publick Assemblies, in opposition to the Civil Laws, and by this exposed themselves to the merciless Fury of their Enemies: And they would have had them more discreet, and submissive to human Policy in this respect. But these most excellent *Christians* knew how much their eternal Welfare depended upon their unanimous joining in the offering, eating and drinking the Sacramental Body and Blood of *Christ*; and therefore no Danger of Life or Liberty could deter them from this service to their God and Redeemer. They knew that *Christ Jesus* intended this Ordinance as a common Tie to keep *Christians* united together, as a Society of Men enter'd into Alliance for the Maintenance and Exercise of the Worship of God; and, by the Blessing of God upon the sincere belief and Practice of this Principle, Persecution was a Means of giving Growth and Vigour to *Christianity*, instead of destroying it. But, if once the Enemies of *Christianity* can persuade us, that the Sacrament, and the Assemblies held for the Cele-

Celebration of it, are not so necessary, but that they may be dispensed with in Times of Danger, they know very well, that the next Persecution may extinguish *Christianity* in any Country where this Notion prevails.

Sect. 31.

It is very evident from what hath been said, that *Christ Jesus* lays a great Stress upon the due Administration of the Eucharist, as the only publick Worship of baptized *Christians* instituted by himself, and that we ought to be very frequent in this Duty. And the nearer we come to the Primitive, Apostolical Frequency, the more perfect Communicants we shall be, if we study to keep our Minds in such a Frame as the Celebration of so sublime an Office of Religion requires. Methinks all serious *Christians* should think it too great a Delay to have it but once a Month. If we had lived in the Primitive Church, the best of us in this respect, who commonly receive it but once a Month, should have been thought to deserve publick Censure, according to what I observed in *Sect. 27.* of this Discourse. It is, in truth, a sad Reflection, that the proper *Christian* Worship is so rare among us, that a private *Christian*, whatever his habitual, or actual Preparation for it be, yet cannot join in the proper *Christian* Worship above once in a Moon, even in populous Places.

Places. When once Men are inwardly touched with a true Love of their Redeemer, and do delight themselves in drawing near to God, and do really perceive the Pleasures of his House, and especially of his Altar, and have attained to a just Sense of this Institution, they will discern the uncomfortable, imperfect State of those *Christians*, who are forced to live so many Weeks together without this Bread of Life. Every Congregation of *Christians* had the Sacrament administer'd to them once a Week, that is, every Lord's Day at the farthest, for seven or eight hundred Years after *Christ*. Then the People's Zeal waxed cold, and left the Priest to receive it himself alone, excepting on the greater Festivals. And this evil Practice still continues in the Church of *Rome*: The Priest every *Sunday* and Holiday says the whole Service, nay, it is said by many of them every Day in the Week, and the Consecration and Oblation are performed; but there is none to communicate with the Priest. This is a very great Corruption: So is the Rarity of the Communion among us. A weekly Communion is what all good *Christians* should make it their Endeavour to see restored.

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But

Sec. 32.

But there are some Particulars, which highly deserve our Consideration before I conclude: And,

I. The first is, the true Nature of the Communion of the Body and Blood of *Christ* spoken of by *St. Paul* *. Communion consists in giving and receiving. And it is clear from what hath been said, that in this Ordinance we communicate with God the Father, to whom we offer the Sacramental Body and Blood of *Christ*, and from whom we receive them back again, enrich'd with the gracious, invisible Operations of the Holy Spirit. We communicate with his Son *Jesus Christ*, whose Body is thus by Representation, according to his own Appointment, offer'd to the Divine Father, and restored to us for our spiritual Entertainment, by which means we are made to dwell in him, and he in us. We communicate with the Holy Ghost, by virtue of whose sacred Influences the Sacrament, and they who worthily offer and receive it, are what they are. And we communicate with each other in this same holy Institution, not only with those present at the same Time and Place, but with all good Communicants throughout the whole World. *For we being many are one Loaf, and one Body* †, says the Apostle, *for we are all*

* 1 Cor. x. 16.

† *Ibid.* x. 17.

Partakers of that one Loaf. Our Sacrifice is the same, our Feast upon that Sacrament the same. The several Masses of Bread, offer'd in the several most distant Regions of the Universe, are mystically but one Loaf, as representing the one Body of *Christ*, and consecrated by the one Spirit. And therefore the several Congregations are by this means but one Church, confederated together by this one Sacrifice, and influenced by the one Spirit.

All Sacrifice was ever esteem'd to be a Sect. 33.
Covenant, or Communion with that God to whom it was offer'd; and for this reason some part of the Materials brought to the Altar was returned back to them who offer'd it, to make a religious Feast, as I have shew'd in *Discourse I. Sect. 27.* The whole Christian Sacrifice is by God yielded to the Priest, and People who presented it to him, and none of it consumed by Fire on the Altar to remove that Reproach of the antient sacrifices, as if God's Hunger was satisfied by accepting one share of the Sacrifice as peculiarly his own; of which I spake in *Discourse I. Sect. 35.* But farther this Communion of God with the Offerers was very imperfectly represented in the *Levitical* Law. For the Laity had no share in any sacrifices but the Passover, and the Peace-offerings; the Priests only feasted on the Meal-offerings, and Sin, and Trespas-offerings,

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ferings, and they themselves did not taste of the Drink-offerings; as may appear from *Discourse I. Sect. 9. 23, 24, 25.* But now, under the Gospel, both Priests and People are admitted into full Communion with God. They are both by *Christ's* Institution, and the Practice of the Church thro' all Ages, excepting some of the last, and worst, to partake of the Sacramental Body and Blood of *Christ*. The Communion of God with his Church, and of the Members of the Church with each other, before the coming of *Christ* was merely external, by letting them eat some Share of what was offer'd at the Altar. But this Communion is now perfected by the inward Power and Energy of the Holy Spirit.

Sect. 34.

As the Eucharist is a covenanting Sacrifice, whereby the Church communicates with the Holy Trinity, and the several Members of it with each other; so our Saviour in this respect lays a greater Stress on the Sacramental Blood than on the Body. For *this Cup*, says he, *is the New Covenant in my Blood.* Both the Old and the New Covenant were confirm'd with the Bloody Sacrifice. And the Cup in the Eucharist is *the Blood of the everlasting Covenant* to the *Christian Church*, and to every Member of it. See *Disc. II. Sect. 30, 31.* And by drinking of this Cup in a *Christian* Manner the Covenant is renew'd, and the

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Communion continued between God and us. The Ruling Part of the Church of Rome can never answer their Tyranny toward their Laity, in depriving them of this sacred Legacy, bequeathed to them by *Christ Jesus*. For tho' the Church of Rome offers to God both the Bread and Wine, yet the Priest that officiates distributes the Bread, or Hosts, only to the People, or the assisting Clergymen, but drinks the whole himself. He cannot fulfil the Commandment of his Master, who said, *Drink ye ALL of this*, without incurring the wicked Censure of his Superiors. This Proceeding of theirs is the more intolerable, because by this means one main End of the Sacrifice is defeated; that is, the Communion of the People with God, which consists principally in their drinking of the Cup, is maimed, if not entirely intercepted. It is pretended, that the People in receiving the Body do at the same time receive the Blood also. But this is all mere humane Invention. It is evident, that our Saviour intended his Body and Blood to be offer'd and receiv'd in the Sacrament, separate, and distinctly from each other. See *Disc. II. Sect. 7. 30, 31.*

Therefore every good Communicant may depend on the Blessing pronounced by the Priest at the Conclusion of the Communion Service. For all spiritual Be-

Sect. 35.

nedictions are assured by *Christ* to those who labour for this Food, by bringing themselves to a sincere Belief in *Christ*, and his Gospel, and in the Promises settled by him on those who eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, according to his Directions. The Priest's Benediction did ever conclude the Sacrificial Service, as I have shew'd in *Disc. I. Sect. 32.* And no *Christian* will doubt but the *Christian* Sacrifice is as fruitful in all spiritual Blessings, as the *Levitical* was in temporal.

Sect. 36.

2. From what hath been said in this Discourse, they who live in the Contempt, or Neglect, of the Communion, may see their own Danger. *Jesus Christ* expressly tells his Disciples, *Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his Blood, ye have no Life in you,* ver. 53. Such Men may indeed lead inoffensive Lives, and so may a *Turk*, or *Heathen*: But they must want the Principle of the true spiritual Life, because this is to be drawn from him that is the only Author of it, that is, *Christ Jesus*. But by neglecting the Means of Communion with him, they lose all the Privileges which flow from it. It is evident, that they who wilfully abstain from this Sacrament, do it, either

Sect. 37.

(1.) Out of an Opinion, that the Sacrament is not necessary to Salvation, even when it may be had. I shall only desire such

such *Christians* to hearken to the Words of *Christ Jesus* just now cited, rather than to their own vain groundless Fancies. I hope, they expect true Life from *Christ Jesus* only; if they expect it from any other, they are not *Christians*, and therefore I am not at present speaking to them; if they expect it from him, they ought to comply with the Terms on which he promiset^h it. As the Words themselves do plainly, and strongly, imply the Necessity of receiving of the Sacrament; so I crave leave to say, that there is nothing to be said, that looks like a Proof to the contrary. *Christians* had been persuaded out of their Senses, by being made to believe that there was neither Bread nor Wine in the Communion, before ever they entertain'd a Conceit that these Words were not to be understood of the Sacrament. We have recover'd ourselves from these foul Mistakes, so far as to see, and taste, that the Bread and Wine do remain after the Consecration, and to give credit to the Testimony of our Eyes, and Palates, in this Point. And it is to be hoped, that we shall by degrees perceive, and be convinced, that *Christ* hath no Flesh that we can eat, no Blood that we can drink, but in the Sacrament only; and that therefore, if we believe him, and desire and expect true Life from him, we must comply with the Con-

ditions fix'd by him, and therefore eat his Body, and drink his Blood. We have no such Reason to be fond of this Error, as the Pope and his Clergy have: They cannot confess the Necessity of drinking *Christ's* Blood, but they must at the same time acknowledge their own Tyranny, in denying the Cup to the Laity. We have taken away the Occasion of this false Gloss, this grievous Error; let us take away the Error too. And, in truth, I cannot conceive, how the Man who believes *Christ Jesus* to have eternal Life and Death at his Disposal, can be in any measure easy, while he lives in the Transgression of as direct and plain a Law as he ever gave to Men, namely, that they should eat this Bread, and drink this Cup; or how they can think themselves good *Christians*, while they wholly abstain from the proper *Christian* Worship; or how they can persuade themselves that they are in Communion with God and *Christ Jesus*, so long as they forbear that Ordinance, in which alone *Christ* promises to confer all the Blessings of his Gospel to his Disciples.

Sect. 38.

(2.) Or else Men refuse to communicate out of an opinion that they are unworthy. And if they really are so, it does indeed nearly concern them to abstain from the Sacrament: But then, I think, it is agreed on all Hands that nothing can make Men

unwor-

his unworthy but wilful Sin, and Impen-
no- tence under the Guilt of it; or an Igno-
as- rance of the Nature of this Ordinance.
they Neither of these are a just Excuse for our
ing- not receiving; because it is in our Power
ame- to remove them, and it is our Duty to re-
, in- move them, and that too with all possible
have- Expedition. Wilful and known Sin, so
false- long as we remain impenitent in it, is a
take- Bar to our entring into Heaven, as well as
can- to our going to the Altar. And can any sin-
eves- cere *Christian* enjoy himself with any tolera-
and- ble degree of Patience, while he is in such
nea- a State as that the Wrath of God abideth
ref- on him? For no Man, who believes the
ever- Scripture, can doubt but that all who have
eat- been guilty of such Sin, and not repented
now- of it, are in a very unsafe Condition, whe-
ans, ther they receive the Sacrament, or not.
pro- Some Men seem to act as if they thought
can- that such as do not communicate, are for
om- that reason at liberty to proceed in their
long- Sins. But be not deceiv'd: For *the un-*
nich- *righteous shall not inherit the kingdom of*
Bles- *God*. And if, by their own Confession, they
cate- are unfit to receive the Sacramental Body
thy. and Blood of *Christ*, sure they cannot judge
deed- themselves fit to enjoy *Christ* himself in
the- his eternal Kingdom. As while they re-
reed- main in this Condition they are indeed un-
Men- fit to receive the Communion; so they
vor- ought to be sensible that while they remain
in

in this State they are very miserable, and therefore ought in Reason, and in Compassion to their own Souls, to make haste out of it. If Ignorance be their Plea, why do they not endeavour to inform themselves? Let them assure themselves that affected Ignorance is so far from being an Excuse, that it is an Aggravation. For according to our Saviour's Observation, the reason why *Men * hate the light, and love darkness rather than light, is because their deeds are evil*: They avoid Instruction, because if they once get a Knowledge of their Duty, this will give them a new Trouble, that is, either to practise it, or to kick against the Pricks of their own Conscience, if they should continue to act contrary to their Knowledge.

Sect. 39.

(3.) Or else they are such as defer the receiving of the Sacrament for the present, in hopes that they shall come to a riper Age, and a cooler State, than they feel themselves in at present, and that they shall have time to fit themselves for the Communion, and for their Remove into another World, both at once. These are the Triflers in Religion, who neither discard, nor espouse it, neither abandon, nor practise it; but talk, and perhaps do really think of making it their last Refuge. But in the mean time they pass a great Slight,

* John iii. 19, 20.

and shew a perfect Indifference toward it. All that is usually said against a Death-bed Repentance is of force against these Men, who delay their time of beginning to be Communicants: And this especially ought to be consider'd, that the time which they expect to come may fail them; and that they may pass out of this World into the next without any notice, or warning. But supposing they should have their Wish, and that they should be aware of their approaching end, for some Weeks, or Months before hand; and that during this Time of gradual Decay, they should receive the Sacrament once, or twice, or somewhat oftner; yet I will leave it to themselves to judge, whether by this means they can be said to be habitual Communicants, or to eat and drink the Sacramental Body and Blood of *Christ*, with that frequency as they ought to do, according to what has been laid down in the 26th and 27th *Text. of this Discourse.* All *Christians*, I conceive, ought to be exhorted not to put any Confidence in their receiving the Sacrament of the Eucharist once and away; especially if it be done for some Worldly End, or upon a Death-bed. Because as Baptism was design'd to be the Sacrament of Entrance into the *Christian* Church and Worship; so the Eucharist, in the Intention of our Lord, is the proper

per Business and Employ of that Church, the very Worship to which we are admitted by Baptism. And what a *Christian* is he who hath through the main course of his Life neglected the proper, solemn, *Christian* Worship, and perform'd it once or twice, just when he was upon his departure; and this too perhaps when he was scarce a living Member of the *Christian* Church, but half dead with Diseases, or Infirmities; when he was not capable of going to join with any *Christian* Congregation, which is the proper Place, and manner of doing it; but must have this most solemn, publick Ordinance celebrated for his Benefit in a private House, and with much less Decency and Reverence, than so Great and Important a Service justly requires? I cannot think, that a Man fulfils the Law of eating and drinking the Sacrament, by doing it some few times toward his end, any better than that Man fulfils the Law of reading the Scripture, of publick Prayer, or of hearing God's Word, who hath done these Things three or four Times in his whole Life. We have heard of some Divines that have asserted it to be sufficient for a Man once before he dies to put forth an Act of Love to God. And they must proceed on the same Grounds, who can imagine that a Man does enough to save his Soul from eternal

eternal Punishment, who practises any of these Duties now and then, very rarely, which ought in Reason to be very often repeated, and be made parts of our constant Study and Employ.

3. But the main Point in this Affair, Sect. 40. which all who desire to be good Communicants ought to secure, is their Faith. I do not mean their general Faith only, but their hearty Consent to the Doctrine of our Saviour, concerning eating his Flesh and drinking his Blood, contain'd in this Chapter. There are two Diseases which have spread themselves far and near among the *Christians* of this Age, which would effectually be cur'd by such a Faith. The first is, that of receiving the Sacrament without any Examination, or just Thought of the Ordinance, or of their own spiritual State. It is true that *Christians* of great Proficiency, who for a long time past have made Religion their Study and Practice, and have willingly omitted no opportunity of receiving the Sacrament, by their Daily Devotions, Searches into their own Hearts, and Humiliations under the Hand of God, are habitually prepar'd for the Holy Sacrament, and, like the Primitive *Christians*, are fit Daily to receive it. But they who lead careless Lives, and are now beginning to enter upon a Religious Course, and to become Communicants,

cants ought first to be well assur'd, that they do competently well know the Nature of the Sacrament, and that they themselves are in a fit Disposition to receive it. He who considers the Eucharist only as a piece of Bread, and a little Wine taken in Memory of a Crucify'd *Jesus*, can see small reason to be very careful in preparing himself for the receiving of it. And an Atheist, (if there be such a Monster in the World) may believe this. But he who hath those just Conceptions of the Eucharist which are given us in this Chapter, and other Parts of the New-Testament; that esteems it as the sacramental Flesh and Blood of his Redeemer, consecrated, and made what it is, by the Power of the Holy Spirit; by receiving whereof we communicate with God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, as well as with one another; that by receiving it as *Christians* ought to do, we receive the Pardon of our Sins, the Assurance of Divine Grace, and of a happy Resurrection; that by unworthy receiving of it, we eat and drink our Damnation; such a Man will no more presume to communicate, while he is under any wilful Defilement, than *Adam* durst put forth his Hand to eat of the Fruit of the Tree of Life, after a Cherub with a flaming Sword was set to guard it. The Apostle tells

tells us that many of the *Christians* at *Corinth* were Weak, and Sickly, * and many slept, or had actually dy'd by a Divine Judgment, for their Indignities committed against the Body and Blood of *Christ*, in the Holy Sacrament. The *Jews* tell us that several of their High Priests were struck dead by a Sword proceeding from the Cherubim in the Holy of Holies, for their Omissions, or Defects, in the sacred Ministrations. If we see nothing of this now-a-days, it is not because God winks at the Neglect, or Contempt of his own Institutions; but because he reserves his Vengeance to be display'd all at once at the great and terrible Day of Judgment. On the other Side it is not to be conceived, that Men who sincerely believe the Gospel, could be so hardy as to live, and even to dye without communicating in this sacred Ordinance, if they did consider our Saviour as speaking of this matter, when he says, *Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his Blood, ye have no Life in you*; and especially when it is remembred that he means an habitual, a constant, or very frequent Eating, as I have shew'd in the 26th and 27th *Text. of this Discourse*. How can it be thought that any *Christian* Man shou'd wilfully, even through the main Course

* 1 Cor. xi. 30.

of his Life, abstain from the Sacrament if he were throughly convinc'd, that all the Blessings of the Gospel did depend on his worthy, and frequent receiving of it when it may be had? And I am firmly perswaded that this is the Sum of what *Christ* teacheth us in this Chapter: And I cannot doubt of it when I consider, that this was the Belief of all *Christians* in the first and purest Ages.

Sect. 41.

To believe this Doctrine, is indeed *Work*, or *Labour*, so our Saviour justly calls it: A great part of those who first heard it, could not be perswaded that it was possible for him, in any good Sense to give his Flesh to be eat, his Blood to be drank; or that, if he could, the Benefit of eating, and drinking them, could be so great as he had promised; therefore *they went away, and walked no more with him*, ver. 66. *Christ* foreknew what corrupt Glosses Men of latter Ages would put upon his Words, and how difficult it would be for private *Christians* to break through Prejudices, and Mistakes, made current by the Countenance and Traditions of great Men. And perhaps there is no one Point in our Religion, that requires more Labour, and Study, to be rightly inform'd in, at this Day, than that of which I am now speaking; I mean the true discerning of our Lord's Body in the Holy

Holy Sacrament, and the Benefits promised to them who receive it, in this with Chapter of *St. John's Gospel*. Let me prevail with any sensible *Christian* to read this Chapter with Seriousness and Attention, and especially from the 26th to the 28th Verse, and again from the 50th to the 64th Verse, and to permit his own Reason to be judge of the Meaning and Intention of our Saviour in this Place; let him hear the Voice of his Blessed Master speaking to him, and not be drawn aside by the artful Glosses of *Popish*, or mistaken *Protestant* Commentators; and I judge it impossible for him to misunderstand such plain Declarations as *Christ* there makes, concerning the Sacrament of his Flesh, and Blood. They are plain to us who know that our Lord did afterwards ordain such a Sacrament. Though when our Saviour spake them, the Apostles themselves were shocked with them, because they were not yet acquainted with his Intention.

Certainly it is a matter of great Importance rightly to understand *Christ's Words* in this Place. It does not appear that he did ever, in the whole Course of his Ministry, preach with more Earnestness and Emotion: He never used such Repetitions, and Inculcations of the same thing, in variety of Phrases to the same Purpose,

Sect. 42.

as he does upon this occasion. These are no vain Repetitions, but evident Demonstrations, that he spake concerning a point of the greatest Consequence, and in which a Mistake would prove very dangerous. He was speaking of the only Sacrifice, the peculiar Worship of his Church, the most sublime Ordinance that ever had been, or could be deliver'd to Men. And this was a just Reason why he should insist on it with an unusual Warmth. Let others then labour for the Bread that perisheth, for the transitory fading Enjoyments of this Life: But let all honest *Christians* exercise their Care, and Industry, to work in their Hearts a just Notion of this sublime Mystery, and a sincere Faith of what *Christ* hath taught us concerning it; and then let them reform their Thoughts, and Words, and Actions, so as to render them suitable to the End, and Design, of the *Christian* Sacrifice. This will indeed be a Work, but it is a Work well befitting a *Christian*. It is a Labour that shall not be in vain. *For he who eats Christ's Flesh and drinks his Blood, hath eternal Life.* To him, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be ascrib'd all Honour, Glory, &c. World without end. *Amen.*

The End of the third Discourse.

De

Devotions for the Altar.

Such Acts of Faith in Christ, as are necessary to make us good Communicants.

BOW my Heart and Knees to thee,
 O merciful God, and Father of our
 Lord Jesus Christ, acknowledging
 that I am not by Nature able or worthy
 to offer up any Devotions to thee, with
 Assurance of being accepted; and confess-
 ing at the same time thy Grace and Good-
 ness, by which thou hast granted us Ac-
 cess to thee, thro' thy beloved Son Christ
 Jesus, and encouraged me to confide in
 him, as the only Mediator and Advocate.
 I earnestly desire so to consider the Mira-
 cles of his Birth, Life, Death, Resurrecti-
 on, and Ascension, that I may grow and
 abound in the Faith of him, as the great
 Prophet that was to come into the World;
 that by this means I may be disposed to
 make a proper Use of his Mediatorship, by
 being constant and zealous in all the holy
 Duties and Services, which he demands of

us, and to which he doth so strongly invite us, and in which he doth so powerfully assist us, and for which at last he will so plentifully reward us.

Above all the publick Services which owe to thee, I desire not to be defective in that which is the most perfect of all, the Ordinance of thy Son's own Institution, the receiving the Bread, and Cup, which he himself first blessed, and by which we are commanded to shew forth his Death till his second coming to judge the World. And to the end that I may be fit and worthy to eat that Bread, which endureth everlasting Life, do thou enable me to perform that Work, and Labour of Faith which is necessary to this Purpose. May every Day more and more firmly believe Jesus Christ to be that Lamb of God, who was offer'd as a Sacrifice to thee, O Heavenly Father, for taking away the Sins of the World; that was offer'd in Mystery under the Symbols of Bread and Wine. O may I, on all occasions, so eat this Bread in the Kingdom of God here on Earth, that I may discern and perceive it to be the Seal of my Pardon, and of my future Resurrection to eternal Life. May I receive and digest it by Faith, as the Bread of God, as enriched and consecrated by the divine Spirit, thro' whom our Saviour offered himself to God for us.

Thou, O Jesus Christ, hast the Words of eternal Life, and thou thyself hast said, *My Flesh is Meat indeed, my Blood is Drink indeed; and he that eateth my Flesh, and drinketh my Blood, hath eternal Life.* Lord, I admire, and abhor the thoughtless stupidity of those, who said, *this is a hard saying, who can hear it?* I am taught of God (blessed be his holy Name) to say, I hear these Words of thine with a sincere faith, and with an inward secret Joy. And do thou evermore give me this Flesh to eat, this Blood to drink. I affect not the delicious Banquets, the luxurious Dainties of the World; the most pleasing Entertainment to me is thy Flesh and Blood, most dear, and holy Jesus! an Entertainment! that promotes not Death and Corruption, but heavenly divine Love, the spiritual Life, and a blessed Immortality. And may this be my Portion for ever! *Amen, Amen.*

Ignatius
ad Rom.

I. Acts of Humiliation and Purity, and of Love to God, and Man, preparative for the Holy Sacrament.

LORD God! I loth, and abhor my sinful self, my natural Propensity to Evil, and especially my own actual, wilful Transgressions of thy holy Commandments. I am unworthy of the least of thy

Mercies, much more of that which is the greatest that thou affordeſt us in this Life which is the receiving of the myſterious Fleſh and Blood of thy Son Jeſus Chriſt. I acknowledge my Guilt to be ſo great that if thou didſt proceed againſt me with ſtrict Juſtice, thou mighteſt have baniſh'd me from thy Preſence, and depriv'd me of the Bread of Life, by driving me into the dark Corners of the Earth, to dwell with Infidels, Idolaters, and Barbarians, from whom the heavenly Manna does not fall and from whom the Bread of God is withheld. But, Lord, tho' my Sins are many and great, yet I confeſs them, I take Shame to myſelf for them, I perſiſt not in them. I do from this Time forward renounce and abandon them. I liſt not up myſelf againſt thee, but own thy Authority in making Laws, and thy Juſtice in puniſhing thoſe who tranſgreſs them. Tho' I am a Sinner, yet I am ſincerely penitent. And I fear, it would be Pride and Arrogance in me to abſtain from his Sacramental Fleſh and Blood, becauſe I ſhould thereby reſiſt my Lord and Saviour, who commands me to receive them. His Fleſh and Blood are given for the Life of repenting Sinners. O let me not loſe a ſhare in them. Thou art a holy God, and who is fit to ſtand before Thee, if thou ſhouldeſt be extreme to mark what is done amiſs? It becomes

becomes all those who draw near to thy Altars, and join in the offering of the Gospel Sacrifice, to do it with clean Hands, and a pure Heart. Thou knowest all my Defects and my most secret Blemishes: And thou seest my Hatred, and Abhorrence of all gross Profaneness, of all wilful presumptuous Defilement, of all Contempt of thy Name, thy Will, and Laws; all Blasphemy, Perjury, Neglect of thy Worship, Cruelty and Revenge, filthy Lucre, and immoderate Pursuit of Worldly Profits and Pleasures, study'd Lying, and Deceits, and of every great Offence: And I do farther pray, and endeavour, and hope, that by a frequent steady Contemplation of the Purity of thy Nature, and of the Religion which I profess, and by often receiving this Sacrament with a well prepared Heart, the lesser Spots and Deformities of my Mind may be gradually wrought off; and that by having thy Divine Perfections always in my Sight, I may have such a Love of Thee, and thy Will, raised in my Heart, as may dispose me to restrain, and subdue, not only such Thoughts, Words, and Actions as are directly contrary to thy Will, and expose us to Punishment, but even such smaller Faults as render us, in lesser degrees, unformable to the strictest Rules of Virtue and Holiness. May I be so duly affected

with the Consideration of all thy Mercies toward us, especially with that of sending thy Son to be a Sacrifice for our Sins, that my Love toward thee may prevail against all Passions, and Desires, that can prove dangerous to my Soul. For thy sake may I love all Men, especially those who are most like to thee. May I earnestly seek the eternal Good even of those whose filthy Conversation makes them the worst Enemies to thee. May my Delight be with the Saints upon Earth and such as excell in Virtue; may I treat all Men with Justice, and Mercy, and all my Christian Brethren, with singular Lenity and Compassion. I desire now, and ever, to keep the Christian Feast, not with the old Leaven, nor with the Leaven of Malice, and Wickedness, but with the unleavened Bread of Sincerity and Truth, that no Uncleanness of Mind may intercept that Sight of thy self, which thou hast promised to those that are pure in Heart, thro' the Blood, and Merits of thy unspotted Lamb.

III. *A Recognition of the Gospel-Covenant.*

O GOD of Truth, who faithfully keepest Covenant with thy Church, and distinguishest thine own People from the

the rest of Mankind, by making gracious Promises to them on Condition that they live in obedience to thy Will; I bless, and praise thy holy Name, for this thy Condescension to thine own undeserving Creatures. Thou didst from the Beginning make Sacrifice a means whereby thy Saints and Servants enter'd into Covenant with thee. They offer'd some Creatures in Devotion to thy Divine Majesty, as an Acknowledgment of thy sovereign Dominion over them, and over the whole Universe; and as a Token of the good, obedient affections toward thee, and in order to gain thy Grace, and good Will toward themselves. And they had some part of that which they had offer'd in Sacrifice restor'd to them for a religious Feast, in token of thy favourable acceptance of them, and their Services. And these were Figures of our Christian Sacrifice, in which Bread and Wine are offer'd to thee, as Christ's Body and Blood, which thou returnest back to thy Priests, and People, for the refreshment, and strengthening of their Souls. But our Sacrifice is more noble than those before, and under the Law: It is the very Body and Blood of Christ (though not in Substance, yet in Life, and Power) that is our Sacrifice, and by mutually giving it to thee, and receiving it from thee, our Covenant, and Commu-

Communion with thee is maintain'd. And by this Covenant we have an assurance of Pardon, and Divine Grace, and of a happy Resurrection. I do therefore glorify thy holy Name for this better Sacrifice, and those better, and more precious Promises establish'd by it. Lord, thou knowest it to be the sincere Desire of my Soul effectually to take hold of this Covenant, and to be sanctify'd by the Blood thereof, and to fulfil my part of it by keeping my self unspotted from the World, and by purging my self from all Filthiness of the Flesh, and Spirit, by being holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from Sinners, according to the Example of my ever blessed Redeemer; that so I may at last follow him into that blessed Rest, which he hath prepared for those who keep their Covenant with thee. I know, O Lord, that it is not in the power of Man to save himself by his own Performances, or Merits; and therefore, in order to avoid that Tribulation, and Anguish, which is justly due to me for my Sins, I betake myself to thee, in and by this Blood of the New, eternal Covenant, hoping for Salvation by no other means. As I now feel my Mind earnestly disposed, by the Power of thy holy Spirit, to acquit myself as a faithful Covenant-Servant to thee my sovereign Lord, and Master; so I
humbly

humbly address myself to thee at thy Throne of Grace, beseeching that thou wilt always assist me in bringing my honest Desires to good Effect; and in my Endeavours to work out my own Salvation; and that I may ever keep so jealous an Eye upon the Treachery, and Weakness of my own Nature, that I may not fall from my present Stedfastness; but may finally conquer all Temptations, through Christ that strengtheneth me. And, O thou Son of God, and Angel of the Covenant, be pleased to preserve me in all my Ways, and to support the Weakness of my Prayers, and of all my Endeavours to thy Honour and Glory, for thine own Mercies, and Compassions sake. *Amen.*

IV. A Recognition of the Priesthood of Christ.

O Infinite, and Almighty God the Father, who hadst from the beginning thy Word and Son dwelling with thee, and in thee, who was the Light of Men, by shedding on the antient Patriarchs and Prophets, and all holy People before, and under the Law, whatever Knowledge they had of thee, and of spiritual Things; and which was the very Life and Soul of those good Men: By which means, thou, and these thy Creatures were made mutually

tually well affected toward each other ; they were disposed to serve thee, and thou to bless them : I desire to acknowledge, and glorify thee, and thy divine Son, for these early dawns of thy Grace and good Will toward Mankind ; especially I confess, and adore thy immense Goodness, and Mercy, for that thou didst in the Fullness of time send this thy Word, and Son, to take upon him our Nature, and as a Priest according to the order of *Melchisedech*, to fulfil, and abolish all the Types of the Aaronical Priesthood, and Sacrifices, and to bless the spiritual Posterity of *Abraham*, in and by the Sacrifice of his Body and Blood, represented in Bread and Wine. Praise the Lord, O my Soul, all the Days of thy Life, for such a Priest, and Sacrifice, by which the Gospel Ministry, and Church, have been once for ever consecrated, and perfected, and their Services establish'd, and a perpetual Availment given to them ; and all the Defects and Blemishes of them that attend thine Altars supply'd by the abundant Merits of this great High-Priest, and his most efficacious Oblation. Praise the Lord, O my Soul, all the Days of thy Life, for such a Priest, and for the Oblation of his Body and Blood, which he commanded for ever to be continued in remembrance of him ; for the mysterious Bread given for the Life of

of the World, for the Cup poured out for the Remission of the Sins of Men. May all Christians be touch'd with a just Sense of such inestimable Mercies. May they reserve their best Thanks, their most devout Praises, to be offer'd to thee in this most solemn Ordinance of Religion. May we all use our best endeavours to prepare our Minds for receiving the Blessings there bestow'd, with humble, lowly, penitent, and obedient Hearts. Praise the Lord, O my Soul, all the Days of thy Life, for this High-Priest according to the order of *Melchisedech*, and for this pure Oblation of Bread and Wine, by which we serve all the Ends, and obtain all, and more than all the Benefits procured by the manifold Sacrifices under, and before the Law: Of that Bread, and Wine, in the offering whereof Christ consigned himself to the Cross, there to suffer Death, and make a full Satisfaction for the Sins of all, who should with true penitent Hearts apply themselves to thee through his all-sufficient Death, and Sacrifice. Praise the Lord, O my Soul, all the Days of thy Life, for this High-Priest of our Oblation, who after he had finished the Works and Sufferings, which thou hadst assigned him here on Earth, did visibly ascend into Heaven, and sit down on thy Right Hand: And now with his crucify'd, and glorify'd

glorify'd Body appears in thy Presence, to give Force and Effect to the Devotions of his Church, and especially to the Ordinances of his own Institution. May all Christian Priests and People for evermore rejoice in this most prevailing Mediator, and never seek for any other. May they with Diligence and Constancy employ themselves in those Duties of Religion, in which they may most safely depend on the Intercession of this High-Priest; especially in the Commemorative Oblation of his Body and Blood. May we make it our chief Care and Study to imitate his Example in all the Virtues of a holy Life; that so we may at last receive the Reward of faithful Servants, and follow him into the Holy of Holies, for his Merits, and for thy Mercies sake. *Amen.*

V. A Contemplation of Christ crucified.

Conduct me, O blessed Jesus, while I contemplate thy last, extreme Sufferings. Open thou my Mind, that I may have a full Perception, and a just Admiration, and a lasting Impression of them made upon my Thoughts, and that I may be so affected with the View of them, as earnestly to pursue those Ends, which thou didst propose to thyself in undergoing them. The Devil, the old Serpent, saw De-

Destruction threaten'd to his Kingdom by thy Death and Passion: therefore he was very active, and employ'd all his Agents, and the utmost of his Power, to raise Fears and Perturbations in the Mind both of thyself, and thy best Friends, the eleven faithful Apostles; hoping thereby to terrify thee, and make thee desist from thy glorious Undertaking, and to bereave thee of all humane Comfort and Support, when thou hadst the greatest Occasion for it. The Apprehension of this caused thee to say, some Days before thy Crucifixion, *My Soul is exceeding troubled*, and to pray John xii. to thy divine Father to *deliver thee from* ^{27.} *that Hour*. It was this wicked Spirit that prompted thy false Apostle *Judas* to betray and sell thee, and who had long before been inciting him to this horrid Treachery. And while this Traitor, with his Comrades, were restless, and kept awake by a Diabolical Fury, to accomplish thy Death, the true Apostles were laid asleep, that thou mightest be left alone, without the Presence of any Man, who might either by Word or Deed relieve, or even pity thee, in thy most grievous Agony, when hellish Spirits conspired together to assault thee with their utmost Force and Malice, to raise a violent Storm within thee, which forced a bloody Sweat to stream from thy sacred Body, and caused

caused thee, thro' Dolor and Anguish, to pray that this Agony might cease, this Cup pass from thee, which thou foundest more hard to be endured than Death itself; and which might have forthwith put an End to thy Life, if an Angel had not been sent from Heaven to support the sinking Spirits. As soon as thy Apostles were roused from Sleep, by the Approaches of them that came to apprehend thee, they all took the first Opportunity of deserting thee, (save only thy beloved Disciple, who followed thee, tho' at a Distance;) and they who were so heavy with Sleep, while they remained with thee, were swift to fly from thee, when once they saw thee in Custody; while the Ruffianly Soldiers led thee from one Court of high Injustice to another, and treated thee with all possible Rudeness and Insolence. And the first of thy Friends, who had before shew'd some Courage on thy behalf, by cutting off the Ear of one of thy Aggressors, was yet terrified into a Denial of thee, when charged by a Servant-Maid to be one of thy Followers. (Lord, deliver me from those Temptations which arise from Fear of Men.) Thou wast condemned to Death both by the Jewish High-Priests, and by the Roman Governor, who yet contradicted his Sentence, by declaring thee innocent.

cent. Thy Body was adjudged to be whipt by the unmerciful Hands of the *Roman* Soldiers. Thou wast forced to bear the Burden of thine own Cross, till it appear'd thy Body was ready to sink under the Weight of it. Thy Hands and thy Feet were pierced with Iron Nails, by which thou wast fasten'd to the Cross; where thou didst hang, with extended Arms, by the Hands, torn as upon Tenetters, for six long Hours together, in the Sight of thy tender Mother, whose Griefs, and Pangs, and Throes (greater than those of Childbirth) added an Edge to all thy Pains. And all this Time the Devil continued his furious Attacks against thee; and the Joy and Comfort, which thy Divine Nature had formerly shed upon thy humane Soul, were intercepted. A frightful Darkness spread itself thro' the Air: The very Earth was shaken, and the Rocks rent; that all sorts of Men, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, might be alarm'd, and wonder, and be astonish'd at so singular an Event, as the Death of the Son of God. And the Veil of the Temple was torn asunder, that they who minister'd, and worshipp'd there, might have a strong Remembrance of the Moment when thou gavest up the Ghost, and imprinted on their Mind. Nay, the Graves were open'd, and some Saints arose from the Dead, that the other World, as well as

this, might not want a Testimony of so prodigious a Fact. But most to be admired is the Stupidness of those Men, who were Witnesses and Instruments of thy Sufferings, and yet remain'd harden'd in their Unbelief, and unaffected with all which they heard, and saw, and felt. What would have satisfied common Murderers, did but enrage and provoke thine, to contrive all possible Means of heightening thy Sufferings, by adding all Circumstances of Contempt and Reproach. They thought it not sufficient that thou shouldst die as a Criminal, till thou hadst first been bought and sold at the stated Price of the vilest Slave, and then as a Slave, or even as a Dog, been put to Death by Crucifixion. They defiled thy Face with their own filthy Spittle. They call'd thee *Christ* with a Sneer, and so turn'd thy own just Title into a Name of Reproach. They blindfolded, and smote thee, and then challenged thee to say, who it was that pour'd this Contempt upon thee: And thus ludicrously treated thee as a Diviner, instead of a Prophet. Tho' thou wast a real King, and hadst the Blood of *David* running in thy Veins; yet thou hadst all the Indignities of a Mock-Prince put upon thee. And *Herod*, Tetrarch of *Galilee*, did not disdain to perform his Part in this impious Buffoonry; and prostituted his own

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Greatness to render this Affront more solemn and injurious to thee. Thy Robe was indeed of Purple; but thy Scepter a Reed, thy Crown made of Thorns. And thus thy Royal Dignity was exposed to the Derision of the Multitude. The Jewish Rabble prefer'd a bloody Rebel before thee, most holy Jesus, and voted Life and Liberty to him, the Cross to thee. Thou wast crucified between two notorious Malefactors, that to those who knew thee not, thou mightest seem the worst of the three. Thou wast vilified as one not able to save thyself, whilst thou promisedst to save others. And when, thro' Extremity of Pain, and inward Conflicts, thy Tongue cleav'd to the Roof of thy Mouth, they gave thee Vinegar to drink. They scoff'd at, and misconstrued thy dying Prayer, as if it had been offer'd to a dead Prophet, when it was, in truth, address'd to the living God. Nor did their Hatred and Envy die with thee, but follow'd thee beyond the Grave: For they suborn'd Witnesses to prove thee a Deceiver, O most merciful and faithful Jesu. They commanded those that guarded thy Sepulcher, to say, that thy Disciples came by Night, and stole away thy Corps, when in truth thou wast by the Divine Power raised from the Dead, and by that means hadst wiped off all the Contempt and Scandal

of the Cross, and of thy other Sufferings, and render'd thy Death the Foundation of spiritual Life.

All this thou didst suffer, O blessed Jesu, of thine own Free-will and Choice, on purpose to increase the Merits of thy Sacrifice: For thou hadst Legions of Angels ready to rescue thee, if this had been thy Pleasure. But thou camest into the World to bear Witness to the Truth, and didst therefore die a willing Martyr for the whole Gospel, that we might not doubt of the Truth of any Part of it. By undergoing so vile a Death, so full of Pain and Shame, thou hast given us a Pattern of submitting to the sharpest Sufferings, especially for the sake of divine Truth. By humbling thyself, when thou wast Lord of all, to a base and bitter Life, and Death, and permitting evil Men to inflict so much Scorn and Pain upon thee, and bearing of it all with perfect Patience and Submission, without expressing any Resentment either against God or Man, thou hast taught us how to suffer according to the Will of God, and the Method how we may truly exalt ourselves. By forgiving and praying for all that contributed to thy Sufferings, thou hast taught us how to behave ourselves toward our most malicious Enemies. Thy afflictive Life, and Death, O Son of God, in whom yet thy Divine Father

Father was well pleased, hath given us a full Proof, that they who are most miserable here, may be most of all in his Favour, and that worldly Ease, and Prosperity, are no certain token of his Love towards us. (May I, and all my Fellow-Christians, learn to pray that we may not have our Portion in this Life). As the principal end of thy Death was to be a Sacrifice for the Sins of Men; so may I make it my principal Care, that the Merits of it may not be lost upon my Soul, for want of a proper Application. And may these Considerations teach me to cherish in my Heart such an Esteem and Love for thee, who hast done, and born so much for my sake, as may prevail against all my Desires, and Affections to the Things below. Never any thing that hath happened from the beginning of the World was so memorable as thy Death, O Holy Jesus. Thou art a Person of the greatest Dignity that ever liv'd a mortal Life, and therefore of all that ever died. Thy Death alone was truly meritorious for the Pardon of the Sins of Men. It was wholly intended for their Benefit, and that Benefit the greatest that we are capable of having conferred upon us. On all these Accounts thy Death deserves to be remembered by us, above, and beyond all the Events that ever were seen here on Earth. And thou hast

justly ordain'd a Sacrament on purpose to continue the Commemoration of it, unto the World's End. May I never grow cold, or weary in performing my part in this most solemn, religious Institution. May I always receive the Blessings there conferr'd on all pious, and well dispos'd Communicants, for thy own Goodness and Compassions sake. *Amen.*

VI. *An Exercise of Communion with God, and his Church, in the Holy Eucharist.*

O GOD of Peace, and Love, who didst send thy Son into the World to gather a holy Nation, a peculiar People, an universal Church, from among all Kingdoms, Tongues, and Countries, and to unite them together in the same Faith and Worship, and to bring them all at last to the same blessed Place of eternal Rest and Joy; I glorify thy holy Name for thy good Providence in calling me, thy unworthy Servant, to be one of thy Flock, and of the Sheep of thy Pasture, and I desire, and by thy Grace will endeavour to improve this Mercy, to the Honour of thee, and to my own eternal Benefit. Thou didst purchase this Church to thy self, by the precious Body and Blood of thine own Son offer'd in Sacrifice to thee; and
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madeſt the Comemoration of that Sacrifice
the Center, and Ligament, of that Worſhip
we owe thee, and of that Communion,
which thou didſt intend to continue be-
tween thee and thy Church. The many
Loaves offer'd to thee in all the Congre-
gations of Chriſtians throughout the World
are but one and the ſame Sacrifice, to the
ſame God, and Father of all, and are ſan-
tify'd by the ſame holy Spirit, and are
made the one myſterious Fleſh of our one
Mediator; and all that partake of it with
Faith, Thankſgiving, Repentance, Cha-
rity, Devotion, and Intentions of a new
Life, have the ſame Graces, Privileges,
and Promiſes convey'd to them; they dwell
in Chriſt, and Chriſt in them, and are u-
nited with thee the Divine Father, and
thy holy Spirit, and ty'd to each other
by a mutual tendency of Will and Affecti-
on; by ſtreams of Favours and Bleſſings
flowing down from the Father of Lights,
and alſo from the Son, and Holy Ghoſt;
and the Returns of Praise, of Love, and
Obedience, aſcending up to Heaven from
the Hearts of all good Communicants.
Therefore I not only believe my Bleſſed
Saviour, when he ſays, *Except ye eat the
Fleſh of the Son of Man, ye have no Life
in you*; but I perceive the reaſon of it,
for Communion with the Father, Son,
and Holy Spirit, is the Foundation of our

spiritual Life: and this Communion subsists, and is supported by the Mediation of Christ exercised in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. And as we are not severally, and apart, but as one Society or Body of Men, to come to the Throne of Grace; so it most highly concerns all Christians to join in this sacred Ordinance with a Heart sincerely well affected to all Men, especially to each other, how far soever distant in Place, and outward Condition. And do thou, Lord God, send out thy lively and powerful Spirit, to unite all Christians in the sincere Belief, and Practice of these sacred Truths, that they with one Heart, and one Voice, may offer this one Sacrifice, that thy Church, and the Services of it, may be perfectly one. As I feel in my Heart (blessed be thy holy Name) the Spirit of Christ Jesus disposing me to the same Will and Desire, Love of what is Good, and Abhorrence of what is Evil, Zeal for thy Church, Charity to all its Members, and Pity for those that are not, which rendered him well pleasing to thee; so I cannot doubt of thy acceptance of me, while I persevere with an honest and sincere Heart, in frequenting this most sacred Service; and do humbly trust, to the unspeakable Joy of my Soul, that I communicate with thee and thy Church, in Spirit and Power, &c.

well as in the outward Ordinance. And do thou, O heavenly Father, grant, that by persisting in my present Dispositions, there may be as constant a Communion between thee, and me (a true Member of thy Church) as is consistent with my present frail and infirm State; and that it may at last be finish'd in an eternal uninterrupted Union, between thee and all beatify'd Men, in that Kingdom of Glory which shall never have and end. May this be my Portion for ever through thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

VII. *An Eucharistick Prayer, to be said just before the Receiving of the Sacramental Body and Blood.*

THE highest Praises, Honours, and Thanksgivings, be to God the Father, who sent his Son into the World to make an Atonement for the Sins of Men; and to his Son, for willingly offering himself as a Ransom for our Souls; and to the eternal Spirit, with whose Concurrence this inestimable Offering was made, and this glorious Work of our Redemption was accomplish'd. The whole Church was first founded, and rais'd to be a Holy Nation, and peculiar People, for the setting forth the Praises of God, and offering spiritual Sacrifices for the Salvation purchas'd

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purchas'd by the Blood of Christ. At the same time that the Holy Jesus declar'd his Body to be given, his Blood to be shed for us, he did command, that this Remembrance should be continu'd, till his coming again. And this is that Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, in which we see the Salvation of God ; and in, and by which we receive, and enjoy all the Benefits of Christ's Death and Passion, if we come with Hearts prepared for such great Blessings ; Blessings ! sufficient to open the Mouths, and raise the Voices, of all that can discern and relish them, into the sublimest Strains of rational Zeal, and Gratitude. O my God, may I never go without my share in the Graces, and Glories purchas'd by the Blood of my Redeemer. May I never want a Heart to value, and rejoice over them ; or an opportunity of joining with the Priests, and People of thy Church, in presenting this Sacrifice of Praise to thee, the God of all our Mercies. The Holy Jesus did rejoice to do, and suffer thy Will, when it was exceeding severe and bitter to those humane Infirmities, with which he was then encompass'd ; and shall we be cold, and backward in so easy and agreeable a Duty, as that of a devout, and thankful Remembrance, and Representation of the Sacrifice offer'd by him ? The favourable Acceptance of the Sacrifices offer'd to thee
of

of old, did much depend on the eating
them in a due and just manner. And it Lev. vii.
15.-21. was declared that he who eat of them, with-
out observing the Rules prescrib'd by the
Law, should bear his Iniquity, and be cut
off from thy People: And thou hast de-
clared by thy Apostle, that he who eateth
and drinketh the Body and Blood of the
Lord unworthily, eateth and drinketh Dam-
nation to himself. Lord God do thou be-
pleased so to dispose my Heart, while I am
approaching thy Mysteries with Joy, and
Praise, at the same Time to be assisted with
such Awe, and Reverence, such a judici-
ous Fear, and Trembling, as befits those
who are employ'd in so solemn and con-
cerning an Ordinance. And to that end,
grant me a true Discernment of our Lord's
Body, that I may taste, and see it here pre-
sent on thy Table, and given to those who
come thither, though not in gross Substance,
yet in Power, and Efficacy; that so I may
be restrain'd from eating of this Bread of
God, whenever I am under the Defilement
of any wilful, or presumptuous Sin. And
however well persuaded I am of my own
Integrity, and Freedom from all such Sin;
yet may I never presume to maintain this
spiritual Life in me, except I continue in
eating the Flesh of the Son of Man, and
drinking his Blood; may I always retain
such a lively Sense, and just Veneration
of

of this Divine Institution, as may make me fear to approach it without a just Examination and Enquiry into my own Heart, and such sincere Resolutions of persisting in my Duty as may serve to keep, and improve me in as constant a Rectitude of Will, Affections, and Desires, as is consistent with my present State of Weakness and Frailty. As no Christian ought to doubt but that the Christian Sacrifice is accepted on the Heavenly Altar, and that the sacramental Body and Blood of Christ are replenish'd with his Merits, and enrich'd with the special Presence of the Holy Spirit; so it is the sincere Desire of my Heart, that I myself, and all who communicate in this holy Sacrament, may perceive, and lay hold, and possess themselves of these rich Treasures; and that they may by them be strengthened, and enabled to conquer and triumph over all our spiritual Enemies, and offer up by degrees all our evil Lusts, and Passions, as Trophies at thine Altar; and that, looking to Christ Jesus as the Author and Finisher of our Faith and good Services, and on his all-sufficient Sacrifice as the Foundation of all our Hopes, and Devotions, we may at last obtain the Reward of faithful Servants, for the sake of the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

All Christian Duty is comprised, and all Privileges of the Gospel conferred, or renewed, in the Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ.

The actual Intention whereby the Christian Communicant fulfils the whole Law of Christ, and actually receives all the Blessings conferred by him.

This is express'd in the following Prayer.

I Come to thee, O Almighty Father, in the most awful and sacred Ordinance of Religion, and I abhor the Mockery of drawing near to thee in this highest Solemnity of the Gospel, if I were not in my Heart fully convinced, that *thou art*, and that thou art a Rewarder of all that faithfully serve thee, and an Avenger of all that live and die in Rebellion against thee. Together with thee, I worship and glorify the Son, and the Holy Ghost, who concurr'd with thee in the great Work of our Redemption. As all good Christians are call'd in one Body, which is thy Church; so it is the Desire of my Heart to continue inseparably united to that Body, by the same Catholic Faith. I do from my Heart declare, and promise, all Honour to thy Name, Constancy, and sincere Devotion in the Worship of thee, a just Regard to all Times, Places, Things, and Persons, dedicated to thy Service; and I detest and renounce all wilful Profanation of them. I resign my Soul up to thee, praying that it
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may be possess'd with such a Fear of thy Power and Justice, as that it may greatly fear nothing else; and with such a Love of thy Mercy and Goodness, as may overcome all my other Inclinations and Affections, and strongly dispose me to keep all thy Commandments, and to employ my best Powers in serving thee, and doing thy Glory and Praise to thee, especially in this most excellent Sacrifice of Thanksgiving for the Redemption of the World by Christ Jesus. Forbid, dear God, I should ever presume to touch, or approach the Bread from Heaven, the mysterious Flesh and Blood of thy Son Christ Jesus, while I know myself wilfully defective in any point of Duty to thee, O Father of all. Far be it, dear God from me, to receive that Body and Blood (in Mystery) which he offer'd to thee for every Man, even for the whole World, not excepting his greatest Enemies, on Condition that they repented, and believed in him, while I bear Ill-will to any, even to those that hate and injure me. In vain should I presume to communicate with thee, O Father, who doest Good to all, and with thee, O Son, and Holy Spirit, whose Blessings and Graces are denied to none that duly seek them, if I am wilfully wanting to any that need my Help, in Works of Charity and Benevolence; or if I look upon any Man, for whom my blessed Sa-
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your Saviour died, to be unworthy of my Regard and Affection. The Death of my Saviour, which I now commemorate, is a most perfect Example of Obedience to thee, O God, and to the higher Powers here on Earth: O let me not by my Rebellion against thy Will, or against any lawful Authority, contradict his Example, while by partaking of this Sacrament I pretend an Union with thee. My dying Saviour had no Guile or Deceit found in his Lips; how can I claim Share in his Merits, if I cherish any falsity either in my Mind or Tongue? What Hardness of Heart is that, which can prompt a Man to receive the chaste, undefiled, innocent, uncorrupted Flesh and Blood of my Lord and Master, into a Mouth or Body polluted with filthy Lusts or Desires, Cruelty, Drunkenness, or Intemperance? The Body of my Lord was mortified to the Luxury, Poms, and Vain-glories of the World, before it was fasten'd to the Cross. May I receive it as such, and as a Pattern how my own ought to be govern'd and subdu'd. Covetousness was the Vice which betray'd my Lord, and caused his Blood to be separated by Death from his Body. May the holy Sacrament imprint on my Mind a just Abomination of the immoderate Love of Money, and of the things below. I have here before my Eyes the mysterious Flesh and Blood of Christ
Jesus

Jesus, the holy, the innocent, the righteous; him I have chosen for my Example, my Lord, and Lawgiver; him will I follow and obey, both in his Pattern, and in his Precepts. He humbled himself from Heaven to Earth; he submitted and abased himself to Death, even the Death of the Cross, when he was Lord of all. O may Humility be the Ornament of all my other Graces and Virtues. May I ever, as I now do, detest the assuming to myself any Honours, Powers, or Privileges, that of right belong not to me, and the valuing myself too much, others too little. Let me never think I step too low, when it is in order to do Honour to thee, or Good to Men. And thus in the Commemoration of the Sacrifice and Death of Christ, I have respect unto all thy Commandments, and do fulfil them all in my Will and Desire. On the other side, I fully trust in thee, O God, that I shall not depart from thy Altar without all the Blessings of the Gospel; but shall have the Pardon of my Sins, and the Assurance of Grace, and a happy Immortality sealed to me in this Sacrament, which is therefore the Sum both of my Duty and Reward in this Life. Glory be to thee, O God, thro' Christ Jesus, for so perfect an Institution, and for my own Enjoyment of it. May I never forfeit this my Acceptance in thy beloved Son, &c.

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sect. 1. **N**EXT to the Divisions and Immoralities of Christians, the supposed Obscurity of Prophecies is the greatest Reproach to Religion. And I esteem all these three Scandals to be equally owing to the Infirmities, Follies, and Inventions of Men: And I speak this with a particular Regard to that Prophecy, which I have undertaken to explain.

Sect. 2. Very many of the Jews, and Samaritans looked for Redemption about the Time of our Saviour's Birth; and they could argue themselves into this Expectation, from no other Prophecy, but this of the LXX Weeks. The Prediction of Jacob, Gen. xlix. 10. did not point out the Time when the Messiah was to come, but only told what should follow some Time after his coming. If the Sceptre had departed from Juda, when it was put into the Hand of King Herod; then the Child must have been come thirty and odd Years before our Saviour's Birth. Both Herod and Archelaus were profess Jews;

P R E F A C E.

and governed by the same Authority. And therefore, if the Sceptre did not depart from Juda, while it was held by the Father, neither did it depart, when it was given to the Son. Therefore this Prophecy was not fulfilled till the Jews were put under the immediate Government of Coponius, a known Heathen, about ten Years after the Birth of Christ. It may therefore have been this Prophecy of the LXX Weeks, which raised in the Jews an Expectation of their Messias, just at that Time when he did actually come.

SECT. 3. And from this one Consideration, we may safely conclude, that the Jews did rightly understand this Prophecy in that Age, when it most concerned them to understand it: And that in those later Ages it hath universally been mistaken. For all modern Interpreters agree in one point; namely, that no Words contained in the Prophecy, do clearly ascertain the Beginning of the LXX Weeks to be at the very Time of the coming forth and Publication of the divine Decree; but every one thinks himself at Liberty to fix

P R E F A C E.

the Commencement of the Weeks as the issuing of some Commission of the Persian Emperors ; and so run widely from one another, and from the Truth, and render the Prophecy perfectly useless to the Jews, who lived before Christ's Birth. For the Beginning of the LXX Weeks be uncertain, then the several Periods mentioned in them, must have been liable to the same Uncertainty also ; and by Consequence it had been impossible for the most pious, and judicious Jews, from this Prophecy to have calculated the certain Time of Christ's Advent. But since it appears that they from these Words of Daniel did before hand know the Time of Christ's coming, which they could not have done, they had not been led to it by observing the Beginning of them, as it is clearly exprest in the Text ; from thence it undeniably follows, that all our modern Expositions are not only false, but undermining, and derogatory, to the Prophecy self. For they suppose, that the certain Time of Christ's coming, was not intended to be made known by it to the

P R E F A C E.

People who lived in the Ages before; nor indeed, to be any certain Proof, that he did come in his appointed Time to us that live after the Completion. For, if the precise Year of the Commencement of the Prophecy, be not determined by the Words of Daniel, or the Angel, all the rest must be Matter of mere Amusement and Conjecture only. They indeed, who date the Weeks from the first Year of Cyrus (if they mean the first of Darius the Mede) are in this Respect right; but they by not duly attending to other parts of the Prophecy, they have found themselves obliged to make Breaks, or Leaps in the intermediate Times between that Year and the coming of Christ. For they have taken that for granted, which the Text does not say (I mean, that the whole LXX Weeks, contain but four hundred ninety Years) and have not sufficiently considered, what the Text does say and them that take the Angel Gabriel's Advice in place of Daniel, I mean, to have a Perfection of the Word.

P R E F A C E.

Sect. 4. I am so far from assuming to myself a penetration or sagacity, beyond those many and great Divines, who have committed the Mistakes now mentioned; that I do with all sincerity, acknowledge myself inferiour to the least of them. Yet I may without Vanity confess, that I have the advantage of them in one point; I mean, in having freed myself from a vulgar prejudice, under which they laboured. For these great Men took the present Hebrew Text, as it is pointed by the Masorites, to be the only Standard of the true Sense, and meaning of the whole Old Testament. This I could never swallow, since I knew that there was an old Translation made in the Greek Language, long before our Saviour's Birth, by Men who were profest Jews, but under no prejudice either for, or against the Gospel; and that the old Translation was revised, and in many places corrected by Theodotion, who apostatized from the Christian to the Jewish Religion, about a hundred and fifty Years after the Birth of Christ, and that this old Translation of

P R E F A C E.

the Book of Daniel, in particular, as it now stands in the Greek Bible, has the Emendations of Theodotion; and that therefore we may safely, and certainly conclude, that this Translation is agreeable to the Hebrew Text, in the State it was when these Translations were made. For there is no reason to suppose, that either the first Translators, or the Revisor would depart from the original; however they did not depart from it in Favour of Christianity; not the old Translators, for they had no Knowledge of Christianity; not Theodotion, for he was a declared Enemy to Christianity; and therefore the Translation made or revised, and approved by him, is the Confession of an Adversary, and for that reason a double Evidence. And in case the Translation, or any part of it, came from Aquila, it is still the more strong a Testimony in behalf of the Truth. For he made his Translation in Opposition to that which was the oldest, and which prevailed at and before the Time of Christ Jesus.

P R E F A C E.

Sect. 5. *The Question is not, whether we shall give credit to the original, or to a Translation, but whether we shall choose to follow the original as it stood in the Age of Christ Jesus, and for two hundred Years before him, and after him; or whether we shall believe the Hebrew Text, as it hath been fingered by the latter Jews, and had a new Sense given to it in some places by the Masore; and the Text nailed down to that Sense, by the addition of their Points, which are but of Yesterday in comparison of the Text it self. The question is not whether we shall believe Christian Translators, or Jewish Translators in a point which nearly concerns the Evidence of the Truth of Christianity; but whether we shall believe Jewish Translators, who lived and published their Versions before the Masore was contrived; or whether we shall be guided by that Masore in Texts, where it was the Interest of those that were the Authors of it, to mislead those that follow them. For I appeal to no Translations but such as were made by Jews.*

Sect.

P R E F A C E.

Sect. 6. *I am far from designing to pass any contempt on the Hebrew Code, even in its present state. In the main, I believe it to be pure, and uncorrupted as to the Letter; and without it, we should not be able to make any tolerable Judgment of the old Version in difficult places, either as to the real Sense, or the Fidelity of their Versions. Even in this Context of Daniel, where there is most cause of Suspicion, there is no absolute Necessity of departing from the Letters, or of supposing that they have made any Alterations in them; but as for their Points either of Pause or Lession, I make no account at all of them. And the Regard paid to them by modern Translators, is the principal Occasion of all the Defects of their Versions, and of the Difference between the Texts of the Old Testament, as they stand cited in the New, and as they appear in the English Bible of Moses, and the Prophets, which is a Stumbling-Block, that all good Christians must desire to see removed.*

An Account of the Translation of this Context, and of the Grounds upon which I proceed in it.

I. **I** AM here first to observe to my Reader, that the whole *Hebrew* Bible was turned into *Greek* by some of the learned *Jews*, much about two hundred Years before *Christ*. If I could certainly have known how they translated this Context, I should have desired no better Guides for the clear Understanding of it. For they were impartial Men who thoroughly knew their Business, were wholly unprejudiced either for or against *Christianity*; and the Writers of the New Testament do for the most part, if not always cite the Old Testament according to this ancient *Greek* Translation.

II. But this old Translation of the Book of *Daniel* was grown so corrupt by the fourth Century, that it was by general

general Consent laid aside, and is not to be recovered at this Distance of Time. I am indeed inclined to believe that the *Latin* Version of the eight last Verses of this 9th Chapter of *Daniel*, given us by *Tertullian* *Advers. Jud.* c. viii. is agreeable to the *Greek* as it then stood. It is scarce to be thought that *Tertullian*, who understood the *Greek* Tongue, would have blindly followed the *Italick* Averfion, if he could have discovered the Errors of it by consulting the *Greek*. The principal Faults of this Context, as in *Tertullian*, are that three half Weeks are added to the lxx Weeks in *Daniel*, and then the lxii Weeks are called lxxii Weeks. This last must have been an Oversight of *Tertullian* or his Copiers: But the half Week is added to the vii Weeks and lxii Weeks in the descant made by *Tertullian*, as well as in the Citation of the Text. This is a sufficient Proof of St. *Jerom*'s Character of this Translation as it was now corrupted, viz. *Multum a veritate discordat*. See *Jerom*'s Epistle before the Book of *Daniel*. And therefore, since I know no other Means of coming at any Knowledge of the old Version of this Context, or any considerable part of it, but from this remain of *Tertullian*. I shall here give it my Reader

Reader from his Book. *Advers. Jud.*
c. viii.

Ver. 21. *Et adhuc me loquente in oratione, ecce vir Gabriel, quem vidi in visione in principio, volans, & tetigit me, quasi hora sacrificii vespertini.*

22. *Et intelligere fecit me, & locutus est mecum, & dixit, Daniel, nunc exivi imbuiere te intelligentiâ.*

23. *In principio obsecrationis tuæ exiit sermo, & ego veni ut adnuntiem tibi, quia vir Desideriorum tu es, & cogita in Verbo, & intellige in Visione.*

24. *LXX Hebdomadæ breviatæ sunt super plebem tuam, & super civitatem sanctam, quoadusq; inveteretur delictum, & signentur peccata, & exorentur iniustitia, & inducatur iustitia aterna; & ut signetur Visio, & Prophetes ungatur Sanctus Sanctorum.*

25. *Et scies & perspicies, & intelliges a profecctione Sermonis, integrando & reedificando Hierusalem, usq; ad Christum Ducem, Hebdomades septem & dimidiam, & lxii, & dimidiam, & convertet, & edificabitur in lætitiâ, & convallationem, & innovabuntur tempora.*

26. *Et post Hebdomadas LXXII. & exterminabitur unctio, & non erit; civitatem sanctam exterminabit cum Duce adveniente, & concidentur quomodo in Cataclysmo,*

*clysmo, usq; in finem Belli, quod concide-
tur usq; ad interritum.*

27. *Et confirmabit Testamentum multis
Hebdomada una, & dimidia Hebdomadis
auferetur meum sacrificium, & libatio, &
in Sancto execratio vastationis, usq; ad
finem temporis consummatio dabitur super
hâc vastatione.*

III. *Aquila*, who had been a *Christian*, but afterwards turned *Jezeu*, made a new Translation of the Old Testament into *Greek*; and he performed the Work in Opposition to the old Translators, and in spite to *Christianity*. For the most ancient Translation being done impartially, did generally secure the Cause of *Christianity*; and great Conversions were made by the just Version of the old Prophecies concerning the *Messias*; however the Book of *Daniel* became defaced through the Ignorance or Malice of Transcribers. His Master in the *Hebrew* Tongue was one *Akiba*, who raised his Name by a furious Zeal against *Christianity*, and furnished him with Copies of the *Hebrew* Bible, such as best fitted to serve his Purpose in translating them. I will here give my Reader so much as I can find of his Version of this Context.

We have his *Greek* answering to the former part of verse 26. in *Drusius* in the

the larger Volume of Critics on this Place, as follows, *καὶ μετὰ τὰς ἑπτὰ ἑβδομάδας, καὶ ἑξήκοντα δύο ἑξολοθρευθήσεται ἡλειμμένος, καὶ ἐκ ἐστὶν αὐτῷ, καὶ τὴν πόλιν, τὸ ἅγιον διαφθερεῖ λαὸς ἡγμένους ἐρχομένους.* in English thus.

And after the seven and sixtytwo Weeks he anointed one shall be slain, and he hath nothing: And the People of the Prince who is to come, shall destroy the City and the Sanctuary. And thus far he was not to be blamed. He translated literally, save that he added *seven* before *sixty two*, which makes no Alteration in the Sense. And it seems perfectly indifferent whether *οὐ* be read as signifying *with* or *People*.

But farther we have the greatest Part of his Translation of verse 27. For I conceive the second Translation of this Verse, as it stands in *Clemens Alexandrinus, Strom. l. I. c. 21. pag. 394.* can be none other than that of *Aquila. καὶ οὐκ ἐβδόμαδος μιᾶς καταπαύσει θυμίαμα τῆς πόλεως (καὶ πτερυγίς ἀφανισμῶ, ἕως συντελείας) καὶ σπερδὺς τάξιν ἀφανισμῶ.* I pretend not to give the Translation of this into English; nor shall I envy him that does, who so closely followed the Letter here that he dropt the Sense. But I must observe that it seems not improbable that *Tertullian* took these Words (which he

he ascribes to *Daniel* twice in one Chapter) viz. *destruet pinnaculum usq; ad territorium*, from the Words of *Aquila* inclosed in Hooks. Not that the Words can in Strictness be so translated; but because *Tertullian* supposed that if they contained any Sense, this was it. From this it will follow that *Tertullian* knew *Aquila's* Translation, and by Consequence he knew the half Week, which he adds to the seven Weeks, and to the sixty-two Weeks, not to be in the original, if he could have depended on *Aquila*. For it is evident from the Fragment of his Translation of verse 26, that he had no Addition of a half Week, either to the seven or sixty-two Weeks. But the Authority of the old Interpreters was sacred with *Tertullian*; therefore though he twice mention these Words of *Aquila's* Version, yet he sticks to the *Latin* before cited for the Text, and brings these Words of *Aquila* only by the by. And it seems most probable that *Tertullian* had seen only the first Edition of *Aquila*. For the Words are so altered in the second Edition, as will presently appear, that *Tertullian* would scarce have given such a *Latin* Version as that mentioned in the Beginning of this Paragraph. Farther, *Aquila* seems to have read *וְהָיָה בְּרִיב הַמִּנְחָה* instead of *וְהָיָה בְּרִיב הַמִּנְחָה* For

For he could never fetch *Δυσία* *Δυσίας* out of these *Hebrew* Words, as they now stand in the Text of the *Masorites*; especially, when we consider him as a literal Translator, which is the Character that all agree in giving him. His Text was more corrupt still, if the Word *קקש* was wholly wanting; and it is certain, that there is no *Greek* Word in his Version that does at all answer to it. Nay, *by* was wanting in his *Hebrew* Book, if we may judge by the *Greek*; and if this was not the Error of *Clement*, or of his Transcribers, he doubly renders the Word *נחצה* by *σπᾶδῇ* and *τάξῃ*: And the Theme of that Word has indeed both Significations; but it can scarce be supposed, that it can have two Significations at one and the same Place.

Aquila saw Occasion to correct, and give a second Edition of his Work; and I am perswaded, that the Translation of the 27th Verse, which stands first in the *Alexandrian* MS. is his Correction of his own Translation in this Place. It is as follows:

Ἐν τῷ ἡμίσει τῆς ἑβδομάδος κατεπαύσει
 ὑπαστήριον καὶ Δυσίαν, καὶ ἕως πλερυγίε ἀπὸ
 φανισμῶ, καὶ ἕως σωτελείας καὶ σπᾶδῆς τάξει
 ἀφανισμῶ.

His Omission of the Word שקץ and Use of the Word σπένδς (to mention no other Particularities) seem clear Marks, that both Translations came from one Hand. But by his Emendation of the first Clause, it is evident, that new Emendations had been made in his Hebrew Text. For the Greek Word Σπένδς, in this second Edition of *Aquila*, shews that the old Word ובה, and the later Word ור had been turned into מבה. And then he read ער for the old and present על, and שקץ is still passed over, as if it had not stood in any of his Copies. But in this Edition, as well as the former, he took שמ as a Substantive in the singular Number, and the prefix ה he makes a Preposition. My Reader will observe, that in both Editions he takes care, that no such Words as the *Abomination of Desolations*, should appear in his Translation of this Place. This was a Token of his spite against *Christ Jesus*. That this was the Text to which *Christ* referred, is evident by the other Words ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ. And this is a Demonstration that neither *Dan. xi. 31.* nor *xii. could be meant* by our Saviour, *Mat. xxiv. 15.* And I am of Opinion, that in the two Texts last mentioned, the *Abomination of Desolation* must be understood of the Image

of *Jupiter*, placed by *Antiochus* in the Temple of *Jerusalem*; and so I conceive are the Generality of learned Men; and in this Place only, does this Phrase point at the Destruction of *Jerusalem* by the *Romans*; and therefore, neither of the other Places were to our Saviour's Purpose. Perhaps $\tau\acute{\alpha}\zeta\epsilon\iota$ may be written by Mistake for $\varsigma\acute{\alpha}\zeta\epsilon\iota$, and that this was intended as the Greek Rendition of $\eta\eta\eta$. The old Greek Translators so turn it, *Chr.* xii. 7. and at other Places: And this Word is wholly omitted in both Editions, unless $\tau\acute{\alpha}\zeta\omega$, there $\tau\acute{\alpha}\zeta\epsilon\iota$, ever were originally $\varsigma\acute{\alpha}\zeta\epsilon\iota$.

That both these Editions are *Aquila's*, appears by their Contrariety to the old Translation, and particularly in the Words cited by our Saviour, and by their Obscurity, as to the latter Part of them. The first Edition is found in *Clemens Alexandrinus*; and it is much more probable, that he should have seen *Aquila's* Version than that of *Symmachus*, which was forty Years later than *Aquila's*: And farther, *Symmachus* did not translate Word for Word, but rather Sense for Sense; whereas this was clearly a literal Version, and therefore obscure and perplexed. The second Edition (as to the 27th Verse) does indeed stand first in the *Alexandrian* MS. From thence, some may

imagine that it is *Theodotion's*. For it is allowed that the present Book of *Daniel*, as it now stands in the Greek Bible, was, as to the main, *Theodotion's* Work. But it is observable, that what I call *Aquila's* second Edition of this Verse, is in the *Vatican* Copy of the Greek Bible, as well as in the *Alexandrian*, but there it stands in the Margin only; from which we may safely conclude, that it is not *Theodotion's*: For his Translation is the Text of this Book. See *Notes on Daniel ix. in the London Edition of the Septuagint 1653.*

Though this latter Edition, come some what nearer to common Sense than the former; yet it is very dark, and gives a clear Proof, that his *Hebrew* Book differed very considerably, both from the antient, and the present, in Letters as well as in Points; if there were at that Time any Points, which, I must confess I cannot believe. Yet we are not from hence to conclude, that the Generalities of *Hebrew* Books were yet corrupted, but only that *Akiba* had found, or rather made such Copies as best suited with the Genius and Design of his Disciple *Aquila*. In a Word, it only shews the Malice of the *Jews*, in disguising such Texts of the Old Testament, as contained the most evident Proofs of our Saviour's

viour's *Messias*hip. This was probably only a private Essay of *Akiba*, and perhaps, some few other *Rabbies*, for obscuring a Prophecy, which they knew not how to answer any other Way.

That the Generality of the *Hebrew* Books were yet in a more pure State, appears from this, that *Theodotion*, thirty Years after *Aquila*, made another Translation of the *Hebrew* into *Greek*, or rather revised the first antient *Greek* Translation, and corrected it where he saw Occasion. For it is universally confess'd, that he did in the main agree with that first most antient Version. And *Theodotion* was a *Jew* when he performed this Work; yet it is evident, he was more moderate in his Infidelity, and a less furious Apostate than *Aquila*. I know Dr. *Grabe* (Notes on *Irenæ. l. 3. c. 24.*) calls *Theodotion* an *Ebionite*, and refers us for Proof of it, to *Eusebius Hist. l. iii. c. 8.* But in that Place I find not *Theodotion* once named. It is probable that while he went under the Name of a *Christian*, he was no better than an *Ebionite*; but that he was a *Jew*, when he translated the Bible, I take to be an incontestible Truth.

This *Theodotion* did in several Particulars alter the old Translation in this Context: But more widely differed from

Aquila, than from it. Ver. 24. he put *συντελέσαι* for *παλαιώσει*, rendered *inveteretur* by *Tertullian*, ver. 25. He put *ἀποχειρῖναι* for *ἀνασκυῖναι*, or some equivalent Word rendred *integrando* by *Tertullian*. He deleted the half Week, which yet was not an Error of the old Translators, but of their Transcribers, ver. 26. He supplied *λείμα* as a proper Explanation of *ἐκ ἔτι αὐτῷ*, which *Tertullian* rendred *non erit*; *Symmachus* *ἐκ ὑπαρχῶν αὐτῷ*. Ver. 27. *ἐπὶ τὸ ἱερὸν* for *ἐν ἱερῷ*: To omit some other Particulars, which may admit of a Dispute. And there is not any one of his Corrections, which the most zealous and learned *Christian* may not allow of. Indeed, excepting the Omission of the two half Weeks, which was certainly an Interpolation of some impious Hand, there is no material Difference as to the Sense between the old Translation and that of *Theodotion*; if we may take *Tertullian's Latin* as the Measure of our Judgment in this Point. And the *Hebrew Books* were in all Respects the same, for ought appears to the contrary, with those used by the old Translators four hundred Years before. If any Variation was, it was so small as not to be clearly discernible in the Translation; and so insignificant as not to affect the Lustre of the divine Oracle.

Oracle. Nay, the Infidel justified our Saviour's Citation, *Mat. xxiv. 15*. He only says, *The Abomination of Desolations* AT or NEAR the Holy Place, instead of the *Abomination of Desolations* IN the Holy Place. He that compares *Theodotion's* Translation of this Place, with *Syrenhusius's* Reconciliation, would think *Theodotion* to have been the *Christian*, *Syrenhusius* the *Jew*.

IV. It inevitably follows from what hath been said, that the *Masorites* had not in the Age of *Aquila* and *Theodotion*, who lived in the first half of the second Century after *Christ*, settled the *Hebrew* Text in that State, in which we now have it; or however, that their Text was not generally received as the Standard. For then the Translations of *Aquila* and *Theodotion* could not have agreed as they do in the 27th verse, in turning מַשְׁחָה (or whatever Word of the same Theme, formerly stood there in its stead) as a Noun-substantive, if it had been nailed down for a Participle, as it is now by the Points fixed to it by the *Masorites*. It is unreasonable to suppose, that so exact and literal a Translator as *Aquila*, should have put כָּנָה in Construction with the Noun just now mentioned, if קָנָה had stood between these two Words in the *Hebrew* Books used by him, as it does

in the present, and as it did in the old *Hebrew Copies*. Nor can it be supposed, that he would have wholly omitted that Word in his Translation, unless, he had had the Authority of some *Hebrew Books* to bear him out in it. Nor would *Theodotion* have retained that Word, and put it in Construction with $\square\omega\omega\omega$, if he had been destitute of good Copies and Authorities for what he did. Nor would *Theodotion* have so contrived his Translation, or followed the old Translators in the first Clause of verse 25. in Words so formed, that a Stop must be made at $\epsilon\zeta\eta\kappa\omicron\nu\tau\alpha\ \delta\upsilon\omicron$, and that there can be no more than a Comma at $\epsilon\pi\lambda\acute{\alpha}$, if he had taken the *Masore* for his Guide, and met with an *Athnach* at $\epsilon\pi\lambda\acute{\alpha}$, as the modern Bibles universally have; and in which our *English Translators* have perfectly marred the Prophecy. *Aquila* would have wanted common Sense as well as common Honesty, if he had turned $\square\omega\omega\omega$ $\delta\upsilon\omicron\sigma\iota\alpha\mu\alpha\ \delta\upsilon\omicron\sigma\iota\alpha\varsigma$, as he did in the first Edition, or $\delta\upsilon\omicron\sigma\iota\alpha\sigma\eta\mu\omicron\nu\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \delta\upsilon\omicron\sigma\iota\alpha\nu$, if he had not found *Hebrew Books* that justified both these Renditions, and both of them different from our present Books as well as these antient ones used by the old Interpreters four hundred Years before.

There

Therefore, I submit it to my Reader's Judgment, whether he will receive the present *Hebrew* Text, as it hath been fingered by the modern *Rabbies*, for the Measure whereby to state the Sense of a Prophecy concerning the *Messias*; or the Text as it was some hundred Years before, and well nigh as many after, excepting only in some Party Copies, such as *Aquila* had from his Master *Akiba*.

The Translation of the present *Hebrew* Text, stands visible to all in our *English* Bibles: The Translation of the old *Hebrew* Text, as it was understood by the *Greek* Translators before *Christ*, and by *Theodotion* afterwards, here follows:

Δανιήλ Κεφ. Θ.

1. Ἐν τῷ πρωτῷ ἔτει ἐπὶ Δαρεῖος τῆς ἡΐας
 Ασσύρου, ἀπὸ τῆς σπέρματος Μήδων, ὃς ἐβα-
 λυνσεν ἐπὶ βασιλείαν Χαλδαίων. 2. Ἐν
 τῷ ἔτει ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ αὐτῆς, ἐγὼ Δανιήλ
 καὶ τὰς μετ' ἐμοῦ ἦσαν ἐν ταῖς βίβλοις τὸν ἀριθμὸν τῶν ἔτων,
 ὅτε ἐγενήθη λόγος κυρίου πρὸς Ἰερεμίαν τὸν
 προφῆτην, εἰς συμπλήρωσιν ἑρεμώσεως Ἱερουσα-
 λὴμ ἐβδομήκοντα ἔτη. 3. Καὶ ἔδωκα τὸ
 πρῶτον μὲν πρὸς Κύριον τὸν Θεὸν τῆς οὐρανῶν,
 ὅτι ἐκζητήσαι προσευχήν καὶ δέσεις, ἐν νη-
 εῖᾳ καὶ σάκκῳ καὶ σποδῷ. 4. Καὶ προσ-
 ἐξάμην. --- 20. Καὶ ἔτι μὲν λαλῶντος, καὶ
 προσευχομένου, καὶ ἐξαγορευόντός μὲν τὰς ἁμαρ-
 τίας μὲν, καὶ τὰς ἁμαρτίας τῆς λαοῦ μὲν Ἰσραὴλ,
 καὶ

καὶ ῥηπτῶντος τὸν ἑλὸν μου ἐναντίον τῆ Θεοῦ μου, περὶ τῆ ὁδοῦ τοῦ ἁγίου τῆ Θεοῦ μου.
 21. Καὶ ἔπ' με λαλῶντος καὶ προσευχομένου ἐν τῇ προσευχῇ, καὶ ἰδὲ ἀνὴρ Γαβριήλ, ὃν ἰδοὺ ἐν τῇ ὁράσει ἐν τῇ ἀρχῇ, πετόμενος, καὶ ἦλθεν με, ὥσπερ ὥραν δυοίας ἐσπερῆς. 22. Καὶ σιωπέσθην με, καὶ ἐλάλησεν μετ' ἐμοῦ, καὶ εἶπεν· Δανιήλ, νυνὶ ἐξῆλθον συμβιβάσαι τοὺς σιώσων. 23. Ἐν ἀρχῇ τῆς δεήσεώς σε ἐξῆλθεν λόγος, καὶ ἐγὼ ἦλθον τῆ ἀναγγεῖλαι σοι, ὅτι ἀνὴρ ἐπιθυμῶν σὺ εἶ, καὶ ἐννοήθητι ἐν τῷ ῥήματι, καὶ σιώες ἐν τῇ ὀπτασίᾳ. 24. Ἐβδόμηκοντα ἑβδομαδες σικετμήθησαν ἐπὶ τὸν λαόν σε Ἰσραὴλ, καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν πόλιν τὴν ἁγίαν σου, τῆ σικετέουσι ἡ ἀμαρτίαν, καὶ τῆ σφραγίσαι * ἀμαρτίας, καὶ ἀπαλεῖψαι ἡ ἀνομίας, καὶ τῆ ἐξιλάσασθαι ἀδικίας, καὶ τῆ ἀγαγεῖν δικαιοσύνην αἰώνιον· Καὶ τῆ σφραγίσαι ὁρασον καὶ προφήτῳ, καὶ τῆ χεῖραι ἀγαγεῖν ἁγίων. 25. Καὶ γνώσῃ καὶ σιωήσεις, ἀπὸ τῆ ἐξόδου λόγου τῆ ἀποκριθῆναι, καὶ τῆ οἰκοδομηθῆναι ἱερὸς ἱερουσαλήμ, ὥς Χρῆς ἡγεμένους ἑβδομαδες ἑπτὰ, καὶ ἑβδομαδες ἐξήκοντα δύο. Καὶ ἐπιστρέψει, καὶ οἰκοδομηθήσεται πλατεία, καὶ τεῖχος, καὶ ἑκκενωθήσονται οἱ καρύες. 26. Καὶ μετὰ

² Ἀδικίας *Clem. Alexand.* * In *Alex. MS.* ὁρασιν is interpolated. See *Grabe*.

³ Τὰς ἀνομίας is wanting in *Clem. Alex.*

³ It is observable, that the old Translators do all agree in joining the lxii Weeks to the vii. See *Tertullian's Latin Account of this Translation*. Sect. 11. *Clem. Alex.* in this agree with the common Editions of *Theodotion*.

⁴ Though all the *Greek Copies*, to the best of my knowledge, do so read the Word at present; yet it is certain

μετὰ τὰς ἐβδομαΐδας τὰς ἐξήκοντα δύο ἔξο-
δοῦ θρωθήσεται ἡ χρίσμα, καὶ ὁ κείμενος ἐκ-
τείνῃ ἐν αὐτῷ. Καὶ τὸ πόλιν, καὶ τὸ ἅγιον
παρθερεῖ ἡ σὺν τῷ ἡγμένῳ τῷ ἐρχομένῳ,
καὶ ἐκκοπήσονται ἐν κατακλυσμῷ, καὶ ἕως τέ-
λους πολέμου ἡ συντριμμένη παῖσι ἀφανισμοῖς.
7. Καὶ διωαμώσῃ διαθήκῃ ἡ πολλοῖς
ἐβδομαῖς μία. Καὶ ἐν τῷ ἡμίσει ἐβδομαΐδος
ἐξήκονταί με θυσία καὶ σπονδὴν, καὶ ἐπὶ ¹⁰ τὸ
ἱερὸν

Nullian read here ἐκκαίνωθήσονται. And the Hebrew קצב
which signifies to make up new Paste) will not permit us to
doubt but καίνωθήσονται, ἐκκαίνωθήσονται or ἐγχαίνω-
θήσονται is the true Reading. Dr. Grabe tells us, that
for αἰ is so frequent in Greek MSS. of the Bible, that
he often corrects this Fault without advertizing his Reader
of it. And that is the best Reading which reconciles the
Hebrew and Greek together. The present Hebrew is best
understood thus, Do thou, O Daniel, renew the Times. קצב (with
ancholem) for troubles or streight is no where else to be
met with in the Hebrew Bible. Yet it is evident the Ancients
read it as the third Person plural קצבו, the Vau might
be removed from behind to before the Koph by meer Acci-
dent. The Sense is the same if you read ἐκκαίνωθήσονται.
It appears by the following Discourse, Sect. 9. But then
the old Hebrew reading must have been קצבו, which is
probable, because it makes a greater Difference be-
tween the antient and present Text.

⁵ All the Translators before Symmachus here read קצבו:
the first rendered it χρίσος, and therefore read קצבו.
Some may think this an Advantage; yet, Christ seems clear-
ly to be called Unction, 1 John xi. 20. 27. Unction differs
from Christ, just as Deity does from God.

⁶ Here Theodotion supplies κείμενος. The Sense is the same
in the English Bible.

⁷ Qy is sounded either gnim with, or gnam the People.

⁸ Cl. Alex. συντριμμένοι. This was Lapsus Calami.

⁹ So was πολλὴν.

¹⁰ The old Translators gave קצב its proper Sound:
the Vulgate and the Manuscripts give it a constructive Sound. They
took

ἱερὸν βδελύγμα τῶν ἱερωσύων ἔσται " καὶ
 ἕως σωτέλειαι καὶ ἕως σωτέλειαι δοθήσονται
 ἐπὶ τὴν ἐρήμωσιν.

*The English of Theodotion's Greek
 Translation of this Context.*

Daniel, Chap. ix.

1. **I**N the first Year of *Darius*, the Son of *Assuerus* of the Seed of the *Medes*, who was made King over the Realm of the *Chaldeans*.

2. In the first Year of his Reign; *Daniel* perceived in Books the Number of Years (which was the Word of the Lord to *Jeremias* the Prophet) even seventy Years for the accomplishing the Desolations of *Jerusalem*.

3. And I set my Face to the Lord God to exercise Prayer, and Supplications, with Fasting, and Sack-Cloth and Ashes.

Ver. 4,—19. contain *Daniel's Prayer which I omit.*

took it to signify *Holy Ground*, as what is under the particular Wing or Protection of God: These suppose it signifies the Wing of an Army, or *overspreading*.

¹² The antient Translators and *Theodotion* seem to have read the *Hebrew* here in this Manner, ועד כלה עונה רצה חתן על שם (the following stands the preface Text) or else they supplied קצו, and read some other Word of the same Theme, instead of ונח רצה

20. And while I was yet speaking, and praying, and confessing my Sin, and the Sin of my People *Israel*, and casting my Supplications before the Lord my God for the Holy Mountain.

21. Yea, while I was speaking in prayer, lo, even the Man *Gabriel*, whom I had seen in the Vision at the Beginning, flying, did even touch me about the Hour of the Evening Sacrifice.

22. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, I am now come forth to give thee Perception of Knowledge.

23. At the Beginning of thy Supplications, the Word came forth to declare to thee, that thou art a Man greatly beloved, therefore have thou Perception of the Word, and understand the Vision.

24. Seventy Weeks are determined upon thy People, and thy holy City for the filling up of Sin, and the sealing up of Sins, and for making Propitiation for iniquity, and for bringing in everlasting Righteousness, and for sealing the Vision, and for anointing the Holy of Holies.

I am sensible some contend for having the *Hebrew* Word used here (and no where else) translated *cut short*. But I am of Opinion, that neither the *Hebrew* חַסַּר, nor חָסַר, nor the *Greek* συρτίμω do imply any Notion of shortning, but only precisely decreeing or determining: Therefore I should thus translate *Rom. ix. 28. For he finisheth and decreeth a Sentence in Righteousness. (For He shall execute the sentence decreed upon the Earth, or Land.)*

25. And

25. And thou mayst know, and understand that from the going forth of the Word to ² answer thee, and to build *Jerusalem* unto the Christ the Prince, shall be seven Weeks, and sixty-two Weeks. And the Streets, and the Wall shall be restored and built, and the Times shall be renewed.

26. And after the sixty-two Weeks shall the ³ Unction be cut off; though there be no [Crime] in him. And with the Prince that is to come, shall destroy the City and the Sanctuary: And

² Heb. *השיב*, which often signifies to Answer. Lexicographers.

³ Christ may well be styled the Unction, as being Author, or Fountain of all the spiritual Gifts, which flow in a full Stream from him on his Church. I am much mistaken, if St. John do not mean our Saviour, when he says *Ye have an Unction from the Holy One, and ye know all Things.* And again, *The Unction which ye have received from him* (the Father, the divine Person last mentioned, ver. 20) *abideth in you, and ye need not that any Man should teach you. But as the same Unction teacheth you of all Things, and is true, and is no Lie, and even as he hath taught you, ye shall abide in him,* 1 John xi. 20. 27. It is true, Symmachus says *Christ shall be cut off*; and so says the present Hebrew Text, and our Translation follows that Text. And I doubt not, but that by *Unction* the Angel meant Christ himself. The Magicians knew they gave no great Advantage to the Christian Cause, when they put *משח* in their Text instead of *משיח*. But hoped by this Means to prevent the Imputation of Partiality, and under this cover took the Liberty to deface the Words of our Saviour, cited from the new Verse; and made the whole 25th Verse ambiguous by the new Punctuations, and removing Letters out of their proper Situation; by which Means they did their best to take away the Key for the opening this prophetick Scheme.

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they shall be cut off as with a Flood, and with Desolations unto the End of the decreed War.

27. And the single Week shall cause the Covenant with many to grow strong. And for half of the Week the Sacrifice and Offering shall be taken away. And the Abominations of Desolations shall be at the holy Place. And even unto the Consummation of the Time, Consumption shall be added to the Desolation. I shall now explain, and prove the truth of this Prophecy under the following Propositions.

I. These Weeks do commence from the Beginning of *Daniel's* Prayer in the first Year of *Darius* and *Cyrus*.

II. They are Weeks of Years, and all, save the last, of equal Length.

* The old Translation was *ἐν τῷ Ἱερῷ*, *Theodosius* turned *ἐν τῷ Ἱερῷ*. Prepositions, especially among the *Hebrews*, are so indeterminate in their Significations, that though it be an Alteration of Words, 'tis no Alteration of Sense. Both *ἐν* and *ἐντὶ* may signify either *in*, *at*, *towards*, *near*, *over against*. If by *Holy Place* you understand the Temple, then the *Abomination of Desolation*, that is the Roman Ensigns, were *near*, or *over against*, or *toward* it. If by *Holy Place* you understand the City *Jerusalem*, then the *Abomination of Desolation* might be said to be *in* or *at* it. I choose to express the meaning by *at*, as a Word of greater Latitude. See Sect. 28, of the following Discourse *vers. fin.* I take the City to be meant by the Holy Place, because our Saviour must mean the same by the *Abomination of Desolation standing in the Holy Place*, Mat. xxiv. 15. and *Jerusalem encompassed with Armies*, Luke xxi. 20.

III. The

III. The first seven Weeks were to be repeated, and were repeated.

IV. The sixty two Weeks immediately succeeded the second seven Weeks and were not ended till *Christ's* actual Approach.

V. The last single Week contains seventy-seven Years, and begins from the Approach of *Christ*, and ends with the Destruction of *Jerusalem*.

I. These Weeks do commence from the Beginning of *Daniel's* Prayer in the first Year of the Reign of *Darius* and *Cyrus*.

Sect. 1.

1. To prove this, we need go no farther than to the Words of *Daniel* in the Chapter. He tells us, ver. 1—3. that it was in the first Year of *Darius* the Seed of the *Medes*, when he made the following Prayer to God. As scarce was his Prayer ended, nay, *while he was speaking in Prayer*, as he expresses himself, ver. 20. and repeats ver. 21. the Angel *Gabriel* came flying to him, and touched him, and advised him, that he came to communicate a Secret of the greatest Moment to him ver. 22. and informs him that *at the Beginning of his Supplication, the Word of DECREE or COMMANDMENT came forth* ver. 23, and he tells us expressly what *WORD* or *DECREE* he means, namely

that it was to give *Answer* to his Prayers, and to build *Jerusalem*, and at the same Time lets him know, that *from the going forth of this WORD OF DECREE to Christ the Prince should be seven Weeks, and sixty two Weeks*, ver. 25. The Prophet repeats the Year of King *Darius's* Reign, and the precise Time of the Angel's coming to him, *viz.* before his Prayer was well ended: He twice tells us, that the WORD OF DECREE was then already come forth; he says, the WORD OF DECREE came forth at the Beginning of his Supplication, and what the Purpose of it was. We are not to doubt but he used these Repetitions and Inculcations, lest his Reader thro' Absence of Mind should over-look these Circumstances. Scoffers are wont to spend their Jest upon these Repetitions of the Holy Writers; but all sober Men will easily perceive a Reason for them, wherever they are used. And as to this place in particular, I cannot doubt, but *Daniel* was directed to them by the Holy Spirit, who foresaw how regards, even judicious Readers in after Ages would be, as to those Points which were intended to be a Key to this Revelation. For I appeal to all that know the meaning of Words, to tell me, whether it were possible for *Daniel* to say

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more plainly than he does, that this WORD OF DECREE was passed by God at the Beginning of his Prayer, and that from the going forth, or passing of this WORD OF DECREE, the Weeks were to begin. Yet the most approved Writers on this Subject, place the Beginning of these Weeks eighty Years after this Time; and some have gone forty Years below them.

Sect. 2.

We are farther to observe, that the Weeks begin their Date from no human Commission, or Royal, or Imperial Grant, but from the divine Decree issued at the Beginning of *Daniel's* Prayer. *Gabriel* came from Heaven to notify it to the Prophet. The Contents of his Message were such as he could receive from none but God, namely, to let *Daniel* know how acceptable he himself and his Devotions were to God, and that therefore at the Beginning of his Supplication a Decree went forth; and to inform him of the Purport of the Decree. It is true, part of this Decree had been passed by God, and published by *Isaia* long before, viz. that *Cyrus* should rebuild the City of *Jerusalem*, or that it should be rebuilt by Virtue of a Commission from him, *Is.* xlv. 2. xlv. 13. But it is observable, that *Daniel* takes no notice of that Decree in any

part of his Writings, but only gives us a Narrative of a new Resolve passed by God; namely, not only that *Jerusalem* should be rebuilt (which was the Sum and Substance of the former) but that from the Moment that this new Decree was passed, seventy Weeks, and no more, should be allow'd to the *Jews* to continue People, or Body politic, and that this Decree should be revealed to *Daniel*, for the Information of the present, and future Ages. I speak not this to solve any Difficulty in the account I am to give of the Series of the Times: For it is much the same as to that Point, whether the Weeks begin from the Decree of God, or the Commission given by *Cyrus* for rebuilding the Temple and City: But my Intention was to shew that learned Men have no Occasion to enquire after the several Commissions granted by the several Emperors of *Per-* for this Purpose; since it is evident, that the Weeks are to be computed from the Decree made by God. It is true, *Daniel* gives us the precise Year when this Decree of God was made, viz. the first Year of *Darius the Mede*: And this is necessary, that so others might know where to begin the Calculation of the Weeks. But it was not from any Act, Grant of *Darius*, or of any other King,

or Potentate, that the Weeks were to be computed.

Sect. 3.

To explain myself farther ; it is to be remember'd, that the first Year of *Darius* the *Mede*, and the first Year of *Cyrus* are the very same. *Darius* was yet alive, but the Administration was wholly in *Cyrus*. *Daniel*, and some others use the Date of *Darius*'s Reign, but *Esdras* calls it the first of *Cyrus*, ch. i. ver. 1. *Ptolomy* in his Canon takes no Notice of *Darius* ; and the same may be said of all the sacred Writers, except *Daniel*. The first Decree passed by any Prince for rebuilding *Jerusalem*, is so constantly ascribed to *Cyrus* in the Holy Scriptures, that it will be hard to find a Reason why *Daniel* should chuse to prefix the Name of *Darius*, and to date his Prophecy in the first Year of his Reign ; unless it were to caution his Reader against a Supposition, which yet hath generally prevailed in late Ages, viz. that the Weeks are to be reckoned from some notable imperial Decree, or Commission ; whereas it is evident, they begin the Date from the Decree of God. And yet I see no Reason to doubt, but that by the first Year of *Darius*, *Daniel* means the same, that the other sacred Writers do, by the first of *Cyrus* ; and that in this same Year, *Cyrus* gave

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Commission for the rebuilding the Temple and City of *Jerusalem*; and that therefore the LXX Years of Captivity were now expired.

That they could not be at an End before this Year, all will agree; and therefore I shall not trouble myself, or Reader, with any Proof of it. In *Ptolomy's* Canon from the Beginning of *Nabopolassar* (that is *Nebuchadnezzar's*) Reign to the End of *Nabonadius* (that is *Belshazzar's*) we have but Sixty six Years. To make up this Defect, the two Years of *Darius the Mede*, which he lived after the taking of *Babylon*, are by learned Men added to the Years of Captivity; but I have already given up these two Years, by confessing that the first of *Darius*, and of *Cyrus*, are the same Year, and that in this Year, the Captivity was at an End, and the LXX Weeks begun. To make up the other two Years wanting to the LXX, it is rationally said, by the most learned Men of the last Age, and this, that the *Jewish* Account of *Nebuchadnezzar's* Reign began two Years before the *Babylonian*, which *Ptolomy* follows. When *Nabopolassar* sent his Son *Nebuchadnezzar* to reduce the prevailing Power of *Egypt*, he not only made him Generalissimo of his Forces, but also Partner with him in his Empire,

T 3 according

according to the antient Practice: Or however the *Jews* esteemed him to be King, whose Might and Power they felt; and therefore make the first Year of his Conquest, to be the first Year of his Reign; and by this means we have gained two Years more to the Captivity, which makes it in all Sixty eight; and with the same Reason, that they assign two Years of *Nabopallasar's* Reign to *Nebuchadnezzar*, as Consort with him in the Empire, they may, and, as I conceive, ought to grant him very near three Years. For tho' some Part of *Nebuchadnezzar's* first Year, according to this Account falls in with the fourth of *Jehoiakim's* as appears, *Jer. xxvi.* Yet it is evident that the Captivity began in the third Year of *Jehoiakim*, and then *Daniel* himself was carried to *Babylon*, as he informs us, *ch. i. v. 3.* And then the first Year of *Darius the Mede*, or *Cyrus* Reign in *Babylon*, will be the seventieth Year of the Captivity. And we may well suppose that *Nabonadius*, or *Belshazzar*, reigned some Months over and above the seven Years assigned him by *Ptolomy*. For this Chronologer never mentions any Fragments of Months, Weeks, or Days, but always gives them to the Successor; and when the seventieth Year was well begun, we may account

the Term of the *Jewish* Captivity to be expired. And thus our Saviour by rising on the third Day, performed his Promise of rising again after three Days, *Mark viii. 31.*

I cannot but be of Opinion, that *sect. 5: Daniel* himself considered the LXX Years of Captivity as already accomplished; and perhaps any Man that was willing to take all Advantages, would have turned the second Verse as importing, that the LXX Years were fulfilled in the first Year of *Darius's* Reign, and I am persuaded, that that was his real meaning. But I need not contend for the Sense of the Words there used by him, since it is plain beyond Contradiction, that these were his Thoughts, because the Word spoke by God to *Jeremia*, was the Subject of his present Contemplation: Now that Word is found in *Jer. xxv. 12.* *It shall come to pass, when seventy Years are accomplished, that I will punish the King of Babylon, and that Nation, said the Lord.* But now when *Daniel* made this Prayer, God had already punished the King of *Babylon*, and his Nation, and therefore the LXX Years must needs have been accomplished. *Darius* King of the *Medes*, had a little before this by his Son-in-Law, and General *Cyrus* (whom he had also made Part-

ner in his Throne, conquer'd the City of *Babylon*, and made himself Master of the East. The former King, or Emperor *Nabonadius*, called in Scripture *Belshazzar*, had lost not only his Empire but his Life. The King of *Babylon* had already been punished, and therefore the LXX Years must be compleated: The Punishment was threatned to a proper King of *Babylon*, to one of *Nebuchadnezzar's* Family; but that Race of Kings was now extinct, and so could be punished no farther in this World. We have the brief History of this great Revolution in the fifth Chapter of *Daniel*, which ends thus, *In that Night was Belshazzar King of the Chaldeans slain, and Darius the Median took the Kingdom being about threescore and two Years old.* And when *Daniel* had seen that first Prophecy verifys'd to a Demonstration by *Belshazzar's* being conquered, and murdered, and by *Babylon's* being taken, no Wonder if he was in daily Expectation of being witness to the fulfilling of the other Prophecy of *Jeremia*, ch. xxi. 10. Thus saith the Lord, that after seventy Years he accomplished at *Babylon*, I will visit you, and perform my good Word towards you, in causing you to return to this Place. We are told therefore by the Writer of [the Chronicle

that the Lord stirred up the Spirit of Cyrus, that he made a Proclamation throughout his Kingdom, for the rebuilding of Jerusalem, that the Word of God by *Jeremia* might be accomplished. But now this Word of God by *Jeremia*, was not to be accomplished till after seventy Years, therefore this Term of seventy Years was expired in the first of *Cyrus*, when the Captives were permitted to return, and to build *Jerusalem*. See 2 *Chr.* xxxvi. 22. And, I see no cause to doubt, but soon after *Daniel* had received the Message concerning the LXX Weeks, which implied the Promise of rebuilding *Jerusalem*, *Cyrus* being the executive Prince, tho' his Father-in-Law was yet alive, did actually give his Commission to *Zerababel* to lead the *Jews* home to *Juda*, and to rebuild their Temple and City.

It is scarce reasonable to suppose, that *Daniel* would have prayed against a known Decree of God, such as that was, that the *Jews* for seventy Years should serve the King of *Babylon*, as he must have done, if he had not been well assured, that the Years of Captivity were ended. For this would have favoured of a sinful Presumption: And therefore, we ought to conclude, that he certainly knew that the Time of their Captivity was expired, when he used those Expressions

preffions in the 16---19 verses of this
 ninth Chapter, *O Lord, I beseech thee,*
let thine anger, and thy fury be turned
away from thy City Jerusalem, thy holy
Mountain --- and cause thy face to shine
upon thy Sanctuary --- behold our Desola-
tions, and the City, which is called by
thy Name—and especially he would never
 have said, as he does, *hearken, and de-*
fer not, unless he had known that
 God's Time was come for their Resto-
 ration. However, it is certain, his Pray-
 er was granted, and a Decree came forth
at the beginning of his Supplication, and
 was in a few Minutes after notified to
 him by an Angel, and this Decree car-
 ried an exprefs Article, that *Jerusalem*
 should be rebuilt. They who will not
 allow that the LXX Years were expired,
 must be forced to own that God shorten-
 ed the Time at the Request of his Ser-
 vant *Daniel*. But since we have no
 Hint given us that the Time was short-
 ened; it is most rational to believe, that
 the LXX Years were at an end, and that
Daniel knew this before he presumed
 to offer these Petitions to God. And no
 Man had better Opportunity to know
 the certain Number of Years, that had
 passed since the Captivity than himself,
 because he was one of those that suffered
 by it. No Man better knew the Time,

from

from which it was dated, because he was one of the first that were carried Captive to *Babylon*, *Dan. i. 1,---3.*

Farther, tho' any Man could answer *Sect. 7.* these Arguments, which I can scarce believe, for the Completion of the LXX Years Captivity, upon the taking of *Babylon*, and the Death of *Belshazzar*; he must be forced to own, what I principally am concerned to maintain, that the LXX Weeks began in the first of *Darius*: For I shall for ever despair of proving any thing from Scripture, if I have not in *Sect. 1.* proved that according to *Daniel's* own Account, the LXX Weeks commenced from the first Year of *Darius the Mede*, or which is the same, from the first of *Cyrus*: And this is the Point, which I am bound to defend. As to the Expiration of the LXX Years Captivity, before the beginning of the Weeks, I have no more Concern upon me, than others have to make it good, tho' I am myself fully persuaded of the Truth of it. If any think it probable that the LXX Weeks began before the LXX Years were concluded, they may enjoy their own Sentiment.

II. They were Weeks of Years, not of Days, or Months.

To suppose that the Angel meant com- *Sect. 8.*
mon Weeks, or Weeks of Days, con-
fisting

sisting of twenty four Hours, is to suppose, that this Revelation was made on purpose to discourage the *Jews* from returning to their own Country, whenever the Emperor should grant them Liberty of doing it. To take a Journey of five Months, (for so long *Ezra* was in travelling from *Babylon* to *Jerusalem*, *Ezra* vii. 7,--9.) when, in within less than a Year and half, they were to cease to be a People, was not worth their while. They could scarce have built their own Houses and Cities, much less their Temple in so short a Time. It is incredible that any one *Jew* should have ever taken a Step toward his own Country upon this View, unless we can suppose that People to have entertained such a superstitious Affectation of going on purpose to die in their own Country in that Age, as they have since. And therefore for *Daniel* to have told them that within a Year and halfs Time, they were to be dissettled again, had been in effect to advise them to continue Captives, and not to accept of the Release and Deliverance offer'd them by Providence. And if we suppose Weeks or Months to have been meant in this Prophecy, this will not much mend the Matter. For this will not make in all much more than six Years and a half

and they had not been sufficient for building the Temple. *Solomon*, in the midst of all his Affluence, was not able to do this in less than seven Years Time, *Kings* vi. 37, 38. It remains therefore, that Weeks of Years must have been here meant by God, and the Angel. And the *Jews* were not unaccustomed to this Way of speaking. It was a Measure of Time mentioned in their Law, *Levit.* xxv. 8. *Thou shalt number seven Sabbaths of Tears unto thee, seven times seven Years, and the space of the seven Sabbaths of Tears, shall be unto thee forty nine Years, or, as the Greek Translators express it, forty nine Years shall be unto thee seven Weeks of Years.* And *Laban* seems to call the seven Years which *Jacob* was to serve for *Rachel*, a Week, *Gen.* xxix. 27. If the Text first mentioned had been translated, *Thou shalt number seven Weeks of Years, &c.* it had been more easily understood, and it is certain, this is the true meaning. Our *English* Translators for *Sabbaths* in the Original justly say *Weeks*, *Matt.* xxviii. 1. *Cor.* xvi. 2. and for the same Reason, they ought so to have turned it in that Place of *Leviticus*, and in chap. xxiii. 15. of the same Book. And we are to understand all these Weeks of *Daniel* to be of the same Length with those in *Leviticus*,

Levitiens, I mean, to consist of seven Years each, excepting the last, which is to be extended to a much greater Length as will hereafter appear.

Sect. 9.

I will add that these Weeks must regularly and immediately succeed each other, without any Gaps, or Intervals, and therefore, as they began in the first Year of *Darius* or *Cyrus*, so they must be continued down to the Term of their Expiration without any Interruption. For some Divines in calculating these Weeks, have thought that they might pick and chuse here and there, as best suited with their Purpose, such Portions of Time as they thought sufficient to make up the Number of LXX Weeks, and throw by the Remainder as unnecessary Cumble. But this is in effect to render the most illustrious Prophecy in the Old Testament, a mere Banter upon the People for whom it was intended. A determinate Number of Months, and Years, is altogether as uncertain, as it were not determined at all, unless we have the beginning of it pointed out to us; and if there be any Breaks in it, then it will still be uncertain, unless we have the Beginnings and Endings of those Breaks. They who leave a void Space of three or four Reigns (and some have gone farther still) between the first

Public

Publication of this Prophecy and the Commencement of the Weeks, have thereby rendered the Determination of the Time altogether useless, and insignificant, to all that lived before *Christ*; but much more have they done so, who will suppose that there were several Gaps, or Chasms in the Times. For by this means, it became impossible to calculate them before hand, unless Men had had some plain Hints given them in the Prophecy it self, whereby to distinguish the several Weeks, from the common Run of Time. If one great Void before the Beginning of the Weeks makes the divine Oracle dubious, then several Breaks in the middle of them makes it much more so; and therefore they are not to be born with.

By Years, we must understand such a Sec. 10. Collection of Days, as commonly passes with us under that Name, or a Space of Time that comes very near it, and such as was then used by the *Jews*. For they were the People principally concerned in this Prophecy, and therefore we must take it to mean such a Year, as a *Jew* of good common Sense would have done, when it was first published. It seems to me, that the common Year of the *Jews* did always, before the Time of *Christ*, consist of 360 Days: Therefore from the
seventeenth

seventeenth Day of the second Month to the same Day of the seventh Month are reckoned 150 Days, *Gen. vii. 11. viii. 3, 4.* which shews that each Month consisted of 30 Days. And St. *John*, who most probably followed the *Jewish* Account, makes 1260 Days equal to three Years and a half, *Rev. xii. 6. 14.* The *Rabins* will have it, that their Years were ever Lunar, and therefore contained but 354 Days. It is not worth our Dispute For whether their common Year consisted of 360, or 354 Days, it was absolutely necessary that they should use frequent Intercalations; because otherwise their Feasts must have wandred thro' all Parts of the Year: For they could not keep their Paschal Feast, till they had a Sheaf of new Corn to wave before the Lord, *Lev. xxiii. 10, --- 12.* nor their Pentecost, till they had two Loaves of the first Fruits of their Harvest, *ver. 15, 17,* nor the Feast of Tabernacles till their Harvest was ended, *ver. 34. 39.* For which Reasons, as they saw their Feasts were likely to fall too early in the Year, they were under a Necessity of keeping them back, by making an Addition, or Intercalation of so many Days, as they saw necessary to make their Feasts fall in their proper Season; therefore, though every single Year was not equal to ours,

et every Week of Years, or however
 very seventy Weeks of Years could
 not fall much short of ours. The *Jews*
 now use Lunar Years, but therefore in
 Compass of 19 Years they intercalate
 seven entire Months; and so, though
 one of their common Years be much
 shorter than one of ours, yet 19 of
 theirs, and ours, are well nigh the
 same.

III. The first seven Weeks of the se-
 venty Weeks, were to be repeated, and
 were repeated.

The Words of the Text are, *ver. 25.* Sc. II.
*from the going forth of the Word to an-
 swer thee, and to build Jerusalem, shall
 be seven Weeks, and sixty-two Weeks.
 and the Street, and the Wall shall be
 restored and built, and the Times shall
 be emptied or renewed. And the Reader
 will remember, that when the Angel
 delivered this Message, Jerusalem and
 the Temple lay in Ruins. For Nabu-
 chodonosor, a Servant of the King of Baby-
 lon, had burned the House of the Lord,
 and all the Houses of Jerusalem; and
 the Army of the Chaldeans broke down
 the Walls of Jerusalem round about,
 Kings xxv. 9, 10. and they continu-
 ed in this ruined Condition till the
 return of the Captivity. I have in my*

Notes upon the Text, in the Beginning of this Treatise, observed that there is just Reason to believe, that instead of *emptied*, it was originally *renewed*. There is an Elegance in the Hebrew Word admirably well agreeing with the Nature of the Things spoken of. The full Meaning is, that the Times, and the Works here mentioned as to be done in them, shall be like Paste, which when it has been wrought into any certain Form by the Hand of an Artist, does afterwards fall, or is crushed by some Accident, and is then kneaded or moulded again into its proper Shape. And *the Times shall be renewed* is an Expression that every Body will better take the Meaning of, than that of being *emptied*, which stands in the present Copies. Yet, if any shall rather choose to adhere to the Word *emptied*, because that stands in all the present Copies, I think it proper to observe, that there will be little or no odds in that Sense. Take which Reading you please, the Sense is the same, viz. That the first seven Weeks must be cancelled, or crossed out, and the following seven Weeks substituted in their Stead; or there must be a Renewal of these Times, because the Street and the Wall built in the first seven Weeks shall be demolished.

and rebuilt in the second seven Weeks, which shall immediately succeed the former. And therefore in that Prophetic *computus*, 98 Years shall pass in the Name of the *seven Weeks*. The Scripture often says of any certain Time, that it is *fulfilled*: And every Body knows the meaning of that Phrase; and he that sees so, if he duly considers it, cannot miss of the Meaning of this other Phrase *the Times being emptied*. Then on a Vessel is said to be *emptied*, when at which before filled it is poured out: And it cannot be said to be emptied till as much hath been poured out, as before had been poured in. When the Sand hath filled the lower Part of the Hour-Glass, then the Hour is *fulfilled*; when that Sand is poured back again, then that Part of the Glass, and with it the Hour, is *emptied*, and so the Time is doubled. And though Time cannot in real Fact be repeated, or filled back again, yet what is done or finished in any Time, may be undone or cancelled; and in this Sense the Time may be *emptied*. When Jacob had served seven Years for Rachel, he tells Laban, *Days are fulfilled*, Gen. xxix. 21. And Laban, by refusing to give him Rachel, that seven Years, might justly be said to have *emptied* those Days, or

to have cancelled and annulled the seven Years Service. Thus the first seven Weeks, or 49 Years were empty or annulled, not in real Fact, but in the prophetic Scheme; because the Work assigned here by the Angel for the Space of Time, that is the Rebuilding of the Street, and of the Wall, was again undone. For the Street and Wall raised by the returning Captives, was destroyed by their Enemies, in such manner that the Work was of Necessity done over again, as I shall shew in the following Sections.

SECT. 12.

That the first seven Weeks in the prophetic Scheme were appropriated to the building of the Street, and Wall of Jerusalem, is generally agreed; and the Gradations used by the Angel do clearly enough shew it. First he tells us of the great Events that are to happen within the utmost Compass of the Times here mentioned; *ver. 24. Seventy Weeks are determined upon thy People, and upon thy holy City, to finish Sin, &c.* Next from the whole Sum of seventy Weeks he takes seven, and sixty-two Weeks, and declares that this Number, which is in all sixty-nine Weeks, should reach to the Prince the *Messiah*, or the *Christ*; *ver. 25. From the going forth of the Word, or Decree, &c. to Christ the Prince*

shall be seven *Weeks*, and sixty-two *Weeks*. And here ought to be the End of a Verse, or a full Stop at the least. When he had declared the full Extent of the first Sixty-nine Weeks taken collectively, or altogether, he returns to give the Reason he had for making a Distinction between the seven first of these sixty-nine Weeks, and the sixty-two Weeks that were to follow. This Distinction did not consist in the Eminence, or extraordinary Nature of the Events which he mentions, as to be accomplished in ; for he speaks of none other but building the Street and the Wall of *Jerusalem*. If he had said any thing of the rebuilding of the Temple, which now lay in its Ruins, and told *Daniel*, that seven Weeks should be spent in raising that to its Glory and Perfection, this might have been thought an Event sufficient to give a Mark of Honour to these Months, and to separate them from the following Sixty-two. But the Angel is so far from this, that he takes particular Notice of the Temple, or the Time of its being rebuilt, which yet was designed for the principal Business to be accomplished in these Months, and which was actually accomplished. And the Reason why he passes over the Temple in Silence, though he mentions the

City and Wall, was clearly this: The Temple was to be built but once within this Space of Time, the Street and Wall were to be built twice; and it was on Account of these, and not of the Temple, that these Months were to be repeated. But the true Reason of his saying seven Weeks, and sixty-two Weeks instead of saying sixty-nine Weeks, was this, that the seven Weeks, as hath before been shewed, were to be repeated or renewed, as the other sixty-two were not; and the Reason why they were to be repeated, was, that the Work here assigned to be done in them, must be done twice; the Street and Wall were to be built, demolished, and built again. And thus the Times, or the Things done in them, were to be repeated, employed, and renewed. And thus we have a clear Reason why the seven Weeks are separated from the sixty-two Weeks. And I crave leave to say, that no one who hath of late Ages wrote on this Subject, hath been able to assign a Reason for this Distinction between seven, and sixty-two Weeks; nay, hath been thought an inscrutable Difficulty, and so indeed it is, to any Man that ties himself down to the present prevailing Notion, which is, that the Angel says, the Streets and Walls w

to be built in troublous Times. This was a Truth, but not what the Angel designed to say.

I am now to prove that the Streets Sect. 13i and Wall were actually finished by the captive *Jews*, who returned under the Conduct of *Zerubbabel* by the Commission of *Cyrus*, which was afterwards renewed by *Darius Hystaspes*. I say, *Streets* in the plural Number, tho' the *Hebrew*, and *Greek*, are both in the singular. For no Man can rationally suppose that the Prophecy was meant of any single Street of *Jerusalem*, and if it had, that Street would have been named. But nothing more common in the *Hebrew*, than change of Numbers; and our last *English* Translators use the same Liberty that we do, particularly, *Pf. lv. 11*. And we are to understand by this Word, not only what commonly passes by that Name among us, but all large Areas fit to receive great Concourses of People, and built on every Side with stately Houses. And by the *Wall* I understand a high Fence of Stones, or other durable Materials surrounding the City. Some *Rabbies* would have us understand it a Ditch, or Trench only. But the *Greek* Translators, so far as appears, turned it *Wall*. And to build a

Ditch is a Phrase, which a modest Jew will scarce own. I am now to prove that the whole City of *Jerusalem* was built, and fortified with a Wall, within the first seven Weeks, or forty-nine Years reckoning from the first Year of *Cyrus* or *Darius*. And the Words of God in *Isaia* do imply, that as the Foundation of the Temple were to be laid by *Cyrus*, so *Jerusalem* was to be built by him chap. xlv. ver. 28, and that as he was to release the Captives, so he was to build the City, xlv. 13. This therefore was certainly done by Virtue of the Powers given by *Cyrus* to *Zerubbabel* and reinforced by *Darius Hystaspes*, Esai. i. and vi. For it is evident that *Hystaspes* Decree was only a Revival of that of *Cyrus*. But those given to *Ezra* and *Nehemia*, were new Grants, and therefore, if *Jerusalem* had not been built by the Virtue of the two first Decrees, it could not have been said to have been built by *Cyrus*. It is true, neither of these Decrees makes any express mention of building the City, or any Part of it; but the very dismissing them from their Captivity, and sending them to their several Homes, did plainly imply a Liberty of building their several Places of Habitation. *Ezra* takes notice, that in the seven Months after the People's Return

all *Israel* dwelt in their Cities, *ch. ii. 70.*
iii. 1. and therefore *Jerusalem* could not
then be uninhabited. *Haggai* the Pro-
phet reproves the too great Forwardness
of the People in building *and ceiling their*
own Houses, even while the House of
God lay waste, chap. last. The *Jews*
Enemies represent them as building *the*
rebellious City, and as having *finished the*
Walls of it, *Ezra iv. 12.* This was long
before *Darius Hystaspes* had renewed
the Decree of *Cyrus.* It may be allowed
that they said every Thing, right or
wrong, that might make the *Jews,* and
their Enterprizes, odious in the Eyes of
the Government, But that there was
somewhat of Truth mingled with their
Aggravations cannot be doubted. *Jose-*
phus (lib. xi. c. 3.) makes them say, that
the *Jews* were building a Fortification,
rather than a Temple, that they encom-
passed it with Walls, and erected large
Porticos and Areas, or Places of publick
Concourse. We are assured, that the
Temple was finished in the sixth Year of
Darius, that is, *D. Hystaspes, Ezra vi.*
15. and it was soon after dedicated; and
this was before one Half of the first seven
Weeks were past. For the nine Years of
Cyrus (which take in the two Years of
Darius the Mede) eight of *Cambyses,* and
the *Magi,* with the six of *Darius,* make
in

in all but twenty-three Years; and there were therefore twenty-six Years remaining for bringing the Streets and Wall to Perfection. One may therefore dare to affirm, that the Streets and Wall of *Jerusalem* were entirely built by the thirty-second Year of the *Darius* now reigning, which completes the Number forty-nine, and the first seven Weeks.

Sect. 14.

The City and Walls remained in good Case when *Ezra* came to *Jerusalem* with his Commission. For we find him praising God for extending his Mercy, in giving to the *Jews* a Wall in *Juda*, and *Jerusalem*, chap. ix. ver. 9. which implies, that not only *Jerusalem*, but the other Cities of that Nation were in a good Posture of Defence. Yet some would have it, that *Ezra* fulfilled this Prophecy of building the Streets and the Wall, contrary to what hath been proved in the former Section, and to what he declares (as to the Wall) in his Prayer to God now cited. Therefore they run to a Metaphor, and because his Commission was to set Magistrates and Judges, and to teach People the Laws of God, that is, to regulate the State of the *Jews*, both as to religious and civil Matters; therefore he did, they say, metaphorically, and in the figurative Way, build the Streets and Walls. But I take it for

for certain, that no Writer, especially in historical Matters, betakes himself to Tropes, or Metaphors, but when he is destitute as to real Matter of Fact. To build a City, or edify a People, does indeed often import no more than good Regulation, or Instruction; but to build Streets, or Walls, but especially to build Ditches, is a Phrase never applied to this Purpose. And I conceive I may safely affirm it impossible, that *Ezra's* coming to *Jerusalem* could be within the Compasses of the first seven Weeks, or 49 Years, reckoning from the first of *Cyrus*. The Truth is, they who are believed to have written best on this Subject, do suppose that his coming to *Jerusalem* was 80 Years from the first of *Cyrus*, viz. in the Reign of *Longimanus*, and in the seventh Year of that Reign. But I am rather inclined to think, that the Emperor from whom he had his Commission, and in the seventh Year of whose Reign he came to *Jerusalem*, was *Xerxes*; nor can I see any manner of Reason, why it should be deferred so long as to the seventh of *Longimanus*. The singular Devotion which this Heathen Prince expresseth toward the God of Heaven, throughout his Commission (*Ezra* vii.) agrees very well with the Character of *Xerxes*, who was a known Hater of Idolatry, and out
of

of Zeal to the One God, rased so many of the Idol-Temples. And there is one observable Passage in the Commission more applicable to him than to any other of the *Persian* Emperors, *Ezra* vii. 23. *Whatsoever is commanded by the God of Heaven, let it be diligently done for the House of the God of Heaven; for why should there be Wrath against the Realm of the King, and his Sons?* This Commission was granted to *Ezra* in the 6th or 7th Year of *Xerxes*; for *Ezra* came with it to *Jerusalem* in the 7th Year (*Ezra* vii. 8, 9.) Now the 6th Year of *Xerxes* was the most fatal that ever happened to that Empire while it subsisted; when the whole Force of that Empire, both by Sea and Land, was routed by the *Grecians*; and he who passed the *Hellespont* with the greatest Army that perhaps the Sun ever saw, on a Bridge of Boats, was forced to repass it with a very small Retinue, and in a Fisher's Boat; nor had ever any Prince a more just Occasion to be sensible of the Wrath of God against himself and his Family. *Josephus* informs us, that this *Xerxes*, in the Beginning of his Reign, shewed his good Inclination to the *Jews*, by confirming to them their Rights and Privileges; and he does expressly ascribe to this Emperor the

Com-

Commission given to *Ezra*. But the Truth is, we cannot much depend on his Testimony in this Point. For his History here is confused and defective; he was one of that Body of unbelieving *Jews* that were under a judicial Blindness. Their Fathers before *Christ* had clearly a just Account of the Series of these Times; but afterwards, in the Hurry of their Factions and Seditions, they dropt the Notices and Memorials their Fore-fathers had of Times past, and especially of the *Persian* Empire, upon which the Explanation of *Daniel's* Weeks chiefly depended; and shut their Eyes and Ears against the Information they might have received from the *Gentile* History, as to these Particulars. I know but one Objection against *Xerxes* being the Emperor that gave *Ezra* his Commission, which is, that in the Book of *Ezra* he is called perpetually *Artaxerxes*. But this is really no Objection at all; for there is an unaccountable Diversity and Identity of Names in the several Writers of the History of the *Persian* Emperors. I need give but one Instance, *viz.* that this very Name *Artaxerxes*, is given either to *Cambyses*, or *Smerdis*, *Ezra* iv. 7. who no where else are so called. Upon the whole, it seems highly probable, that *Xerxes* was the Emperor,

ror, in whose Reign *Ezra* came to *Jerusalem*; and that therefore in the seventh Year of his Reign the City and Wall of *Jerusalem* continued firm and entire. And indeed, if there had been any notable Defect in the City or Walls, when he was sent to *Jerusalem*, there is no Reason to doubt but there would have been a Clause in his Commission, to enable him to make it good; but there is no Hint of any thing of this Sort in his Commission; and in his Prayer, as hath been observed, he plainly enough declares, that *Jerusalem*, and the other Cities, were in a good defensible Condition; and this was eleven Years at least after the City and Wall were finished.

Sect. 15.

But between the Time of *Ezra*, and *Nehemia's* coming to *Jerusalem*, some hostile Impression had been made upon that City, which had caused very considerable Breaches in the Wall, and ruined or impaired the Houses: And *Nehemia* came with a Commission on purpose to repair these Decays. *Nehemia* was informed of this Calamity by *Hanani*, and others that came from *Jerusalem*, whose Report was, that the People were in great Affliction and Reproach, that the Wall of *Jerusalem* was broken down, and the Gates thereof burnt with Fire, Neh. i. 3. And he himself thus

thus describes the Case to the Rulers of the City, when he was come thither, and was therefore on the Spot with them, *Ye see the Distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the Gates thereof burnt with Fire. Come, and let us build up the Wall of Jerusalem,* Neh. xi. 17. All this could not be meant of the City and Walls as broken down by *Nebuchadnezzar's* Army, and as they remained in that ruined Condition till *Cyrus's* Edict; it was impossible but *Nehemia* must have known that from his Childhood; and he must have been informed too, that those Ruins had been repaired, and a new City and Wall raised by the returning Captives; and what filled him with so much Horror and Surprize, was this sudden Turn of Affairs, which had occasioned the Overthrow of the new-built City, and Wall. As the Event was unexpected, so it was shocking to *Nehemiah*, insomuch that *he sat down and wept, and mourned for several Days,* Neh. i. 4. A Calamity that had happened 150 Years before, and which he must have heard told him a thousand Times 'ere this, could never have affected him to this Degree. *Josephus* expresseth it in these Words, viz. that, *The Wall was cast down to the Ground,*
and

and the Nations round about inflicted many Injuries upon them; and Nehemiah in his Speech there following, imputes this Mischief to their Enemies, *L. xi. c. 5. §. 6, 7.* They who opposed the Rebuilding, or Reparation of the City and Walls, were the same probably that did the Mischief, *viz. Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabians, the Ammonites, and Ammonodites, Neh. iv. 7.* These Borderers, during the Captivity, had enjoyed all the Profits of the Jew's Country, as *Josephus* says, and therefore resented it very much that the true Owners had dispossess'd them of their usurped Estates; and that, by their Fortifications, they had endeavoured to ensure their own Property. *Sanballat*, and his *Samaritans*, had peculiar Resentments against the *Jews*; and their Tribute due to the *Persian* Emperor, and given by him for providing Sacrifices for the Temple of *Jerusalem*, was not the least.

Sect. 16.

Nehemiah himself informs us, that he had a Commission from the Emperor not only to build the City, but to receive Materials from the Officers for finishing the Work, *Neh. xi. 5. 8.* And we have a minute History of his beginning and finishing the Wall of *Jerusalem*, and of the Interruptions given him by the Enemies of the *Jewish* Nation.

tion, and by his own People in this
Affair, *Neh. iii.—vi.* And by the good
Providence of God, and the Multitudes
and Vigour of the Hands employed in
this Work, it was brought to Perfection
in fifty-two Days, *Neh. vi. 15.* But there
was another Work yet to be done, and
that attended with greater Difficulties;
I mean the rebuilding the Streets of the
City. For the Houses had suffered much
in the late Assault; and though *the*
streets were large and spacious, yet *the*
Houses, which had been thrown down,
or shattered in storming of the City,
were not yet built again, *Neh. vii. 4.*
The People having been put into a great
Consternation, by the Insult made up-
on them, did not think it safe to con-
tinue at *Jerusalem*, but rather chose to
retire into the more remote Parts. And
without People it was impossible to build
Houses, or to fill them with Inhabitants,
when built. The Rulers could find no
remedy for this Evil, but to oblige eve-
ry tenth Person to remove to *Jerusalem*,
accordingly they did, *Neh. xi. 1.*
Josephus adds, what seems very probable,
that they who came to dwell in the City
were bound to build Houses for them-
selves at their own Cost, *Lib. xi. c. 8.*
It may seem strange that the Enemies See 177
of the *Jewish Nation*, in an Attempt
made

made upon *Jerusalem*, should do so much Damage to the Houses and Wall, but none to the Temple; and considering that the *Samaritans* were probably the Leaders in this Exploit, the Wonder is the greater still. For the Temple was, perhaps, the greatest Eye-sore to them, and that which chiefly provoked their Malice; yet there is no direct mention of any Mischief done to that sacred Edifice, or of any Repairs done to it on this Occasion. It is true, *Josephus* makes *Nehemia* tell *Artaxerxes*, that he desir'd *προσοικοδομεῖν τὸ λείψανον, & ἀναστήσει τὸ λοιπὸν τῶ ἱερῶς*, to build, or raise, what was wanting in the Temple; but I know not whether we may give any Credit to him in this Point; only thus much may safely be said, that in so vast a Pile of Buildings as that was, there will always be room for some Improvements. However, we ought to adore the good Providence of God, which appears in this, that he took special Care that *Ezra*, and *Nehemia*, in the very short Memorials they have left us, have given us sufficient Proof, that the Streets, and Wall of *Jerusalem* were built, demolished, and rebuilt; and that too, as we shall presently see, within the Compass of Time prefixed in the Prophecy of the Weeks. But as for the second rebuilding of the Temple

Temple (if it were rebuilt in the same Time that the Streets and Wall were) we have no Account of it left upon Record. The building of it, after the Captivity, was foretold by *Isaia*, and therefore the Completion of that Prophecy was committed to Writing by *Ezra*. But the Streets and Wall only being mentioned in the Prophecy of the Weeks, as what were to be rebuilt; therefore *Nehemia* gives us the brief History of this. But there is a deep Silence concerning the Temple. For if that, or any Part of it, was built again; yet no Prophecy was fulfilled by it.

It remains that we consider at what Sect. 18. Time this was done. And *Nehemia* himself, *Ch. v. 14.* informs us when he came to *Jerusalem* with his Commission, *viz.* in the twentieth Year of *Artaxerxes*. *Josephus*, *L. xi. c. 5.* supposes it to have been *Xerxes*, or the same Emperor that had before sent *Ezra*: And he farther adds, that *Nehemia* came to *Jerusalem* in the 25th Year of *Xerxes's* Reign, and continued there to the 28th, whereas, in Truth, the famous *Xerxes*, he who carries that Name in *Ptolomy's* Canon, reigned but 21 Years in all; we must rather believe *Nehemia* himself, than *Josephus*. And *Nehemia* tells us, that he was Governor from the

20th to the 32d Year of *Artaxerxes*; therefore he undoubtedly means *Longimanus*, who reigned 41 Years in all. And I conceive the first four Years of *Nehemia's* Government were sufficient for rebuilding the Streets, and the Wall. And if the Wall was built in 52 Days after they had got Workmen and Materials together, we may suppose the same Divine Providence working with them, that they finished the Houses before the four Years were concluded. *Josephus* indeed says *, that two Years and four Months were spent in building the Wall only; and even by this Account every Man had twenty Months left him to build his own House; and private Works are commonly done with greater Expedition than publick. The cancelled seven Weeks, or 49 Years, ended in the 32d Year of *Darius Hystaspes*; he reigned in all 36 Years. The 4 last Years of his Reign, with the 21 Years of *Xerxes*, and the 24 of *Artaxerxes Longimanus* added to them, makes the Number 49; which, with the seven cancelled Weeks, is in all 98 Years from the first of *Cyrus*, or *Darius*.

Sect. 19. And here let us, with a devout Admiration, look back upon the good Providence of God, who first gave *Daniel*

* *Ubi Supra. §. 8.*

and by him all true *Israelites*, Notice of his Intention to double, or repeat these first seven Weeks, and the Works here assigned to be done in them, and did accordingly bring it to pass. For by his means he gave to all pious People, who lived in this Age, a certain, solid Assurance, that the rest of this most concerning Prophecy should be fulfilled in its Season. There were 434 Years yet to come before *Christ* was to make his Advent. For *unto Christ the Prince*, says the Angel, *shall be seven Weeks, and sixty-two Weeks*. When they had seen the seven Weeks, and their Events fulfilled, emptied, renewed; the Streets and Walls of *Jerusalem* rebuilt after their being first raised by *Zerubbabel*, this was a mighty Support to their Faith and Patience; and gave them just Grounds to depend on the Veracity of this divine Oracle. And farther, by this means, we have the Reason of the Distinction between the seven Weeks, and sixty-two Weeks, set in a full Light, which hath hitherto been esteemed an inexplicable Difficulty. Moreover, we have that Chasm of Time between the first Publication of the Prophecy, and the first (supposed) Commencement of the Weeks filled up, which hath driven so many Men of

incomparable Learning, to set the Beginning of the Weeks lower by four or five Reigns, than the Words of the Angel will allow.

IV. The sixty-two Weeks of *Daniel* begin from the End of the second seven Weeks, and end upon the first Notice of Christ's actual Approach.

Scct. 20.

These are the Words of the Angel, ver. 23. *At the Beginning of thy Supplication the Word came forth, and ver. 25. From the going forth of the Word to answer thee, and to build Jerusalem, unto Christ the Prince, shall be seven Weeks, and sixty-two Weeks.* Our English Translators have followed the *Massorites*, or modern *Rabbins*, in their perverse Punctuation of this Text. For thus they stand in our present Bibles, *From the going forth of the Commandment to restore, and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven Weeks *; and threescore and two Weeks † shall the Street be, &c.* According to this Translation the *Messiah* was

* Here they put a Semicolon, where there should be only a Comma, because, forsooth, the Infidel *Rabbins* were pleased here to place an *Athnach*, on purpose to obscure a Prophecy of the true *Messiah*, which it was impossible for them to answer but by this Fraud.

† Here our Translators put no Point at all, where there ought in Reason to be a full Stop, or rather where the Verse ought to end.

to be born within seven Weeks, or 49 Years after the going forth of the Commandment, or Word, to build *Jerusalem*; and the next Clause contains no Sense at all. For who will undertake to explain these Words, *Threescore and two Weeks shall the Street be built again, and the Wall?* Give a Jew this Translation, and it will be impossible for the most knowing and acute Christian to maintain that *Christ* was manifested in due Time, or that *Jesus is the Christ*.

Our Divines have generally extended Sect. 21, these 62 Weeks from the End of the seven, to the Death of *Christ*, or however to his Baptism, and entering upon his prophetic Office, not sufficiently considering the Words of the Text, viz: *From the going out of the Word, or Commandment, unto the Christ the Prince, &c.* which necessarily oblige us to stop, or put a close to the 62 Weeks at the first Notice of *Christ's* actual Appearance. It was not the Angel's Intention to speak of the Death of *Christ*, as an Event belonging to any of the first 69 Weeks. We are assured in the next Verse, that *AFTER 62 Weeks the Christ shall be cut off*. And these Words do clearly exclude the Death of *Christ* from the Verge of the 62 Weeks, as well as of the first seven. This will ap-

pear more evident, and undeniable still, when it is considered that in the very next Clause of this 26th Verse, the Destruction of the City and Sanctuary is foretold. For thus the Words stand. *AFTER sixty-two Weeks shall the Christ be cut off, though there be no Crime in him; and he, with the Prince that is to come, shall destroy the City, and the Sanctuary.* It is therefore as certain that the Death of *Christ* was to follow some considerable Time after the close of the sixty-nine Weeks, as that the Destruction of *Jerusalem* was to do so. It will appear under the next Head of Discourse, if it do not already appear, that the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, as well as the Death of *Christ*, was intended to be an Event of the last Week.

Sect. 22.

And from the End of the second seven Weeks, which happened on the 32d Year of *Artaxerxes Longimanus* to the 23d Year of *Augustus* (from, or after the Death of *Cleopatra*) were according to *Ptolomy's Canon* 434 Years. And it is to be observed, that these Years of *Augustus* end in the Month of *August*, which took its Name from this Roman Emperor. On the 29th of this Month *Cleopatra* killed herself by the Bite of an Aspidochelone and so left her Kingdom of *Egypt* entirely at the Disposal of *Augustus*, who thereby

thereby brought the *Roman* Empire to its greatest Height: He had been for 13 Year before Emperor of *Rome* (tho' not without Competitors) and he reigned 43 Years after this, in all 56 Years. And *Augustus's* 23 was completed in that Month of *August*, and toward the latter End of it, in the same Year that the 62 Weeks of *Daniel* were concluded.

The next Month after this, viz. *Sep- Sect. 23.*
tember, which began the 24th Year of *Augustus*, from the Death of *Cleopatra*, was the first Intimation from Heaven of the actual Approach of the *Messia*, or *Christ*; I mean by the Angel's appearing to *Zacharias*, and informing him, that he was to be the Father of the Baptist, the Fore-runner of *Christ*. In the *Jews* Account it might be on the same Month that *Augustus's* 23d Year was completed, that is, on Supposition that they had for the two preceding Years omitted their Intercalation. For then on this Year ten Days of the real *September* would have run forward into *August*; and if their Years were Lunar, twenty-two Days of the real *September* must have been reckoned to *August*. For the Lunar Year comes eleven Days short of the Solar. But then, by intercalating a whole Month at a Time, they on the intercalary Year made the foregoing Month run over into

to the following ; so that it is impossible for us, unless we had the whole Series of their Intercalations, to know how the *Roman* and *Jewish* Months answered each other ; or to know the certain Day, on which any Event happened in the *Jewish* Account. But we can not doubt, that soon after the Expiration of the sixty-two Weeks, which we are sure was at the latter End of *August*, according to the *Roman*, and our own present *English* Account, Notice was given of the Entry of the *Messiah*. He was to come with a *Messenger* to prepare the Way before him. And this single, last Week, must therefore be opened with the gradual Appearance of this Messenger.

Sect. 24. And the same Angel *Gabriel*, who was formerly sent from Heaven to inform *Daniel* of the Divine Decree concerning the LXX Weeks, was thought the only fit Herald to introduce this last, and great Week, as he did, by appearing to *Zacharias* the Priest, while he was offering Incense in the Temple, and letting him know, that his Wife *Elizabeth*, who had hitherto been barren, should conceive, and bring forth a Son, who was to be the Fore-runner of *Christ*; and he tells *Zacharias*, that in declaring these things he did *εὐαγγελίζεσθαι* perform

perform the Office of an Evangelist, or preach the Gospel, *Luke i. 19.* He had now brought no Message from Heaven in 532 Years, never since he gave to *Daniel* the Scheme of the LXX Weeks; and now he comes at the Conclusion of the grand Period of the 62 Weeks, to open a new Communication between Heaven and Earth, and to shew the Beginning of the grand Events of the single Week. *Zacharias* upon these happy Tidings of the Conception of the *Baptist*, might, if he had not been dumb, have said, as he did afterwards upon his Birth, *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited, and redeemed his People; and hath raised up a Horn of Salvation for us in the House of his servant David; as he spake by the Mouth of his holy Prophets.* He might then have said, *The Day-Spring from on high hath visited us,* as well, and aptly as he did nine Months after this when the *Baptist* was born; but when *Christ* was yet in his Mother's Womb. *The Law, and the Prophets were until John,* says our blessed Saviour; when the Prophecies concerning the *Christ, or Messia,* began to be verified; and the Sun of Righteousness to dawn, then the old Things began to pass away, and all Things to become new.

Sect. 25.

Six Months after this, the Angel *Gabriel* was sent to the blessed Virgin to assure her of the glorious Privilege of being the Mother of the *Christ*, the Son of God. And reckoning nine Months from thence the holy *Jesus* was born in the next *December*, in the 25th Year of the Emperor *Augustus* (for his 24th Year from the Death of *Cleopatra* ended in the foregoing Month of *August*). This was five Years before the Beginning of the vulgar *Æra* of *Christ*. And if *Herod* died before the next Passover they who are most of all for hastening his Death, have their Wishes, and if he lived a Year longer, they have no room for Cavil. *Augustus* lived 17 Years, and 8 Months after this and therefore our Saviour was of that Age when *Augustus* died. Add to this the 15 Years of *Tiberius*, and *Christ* was 32 Years, and 8 Months of Age when he was baptized. But *St. Luke* affirms him then to have been *about thirty*, ch. iii. 23. therefore *St. Luke* dates *Tiberius's* Reign not from the Death of *Augustus*, but from the Time that *Augustus* made *Tiberius* Partner with him in the Empire, which was two Years before his Death. I do not enter into the Detail of these Points, nor pretend to Preciseness in my Calculation.

tion

ions. It is sufficient for my Purpose, to have shewed that the Sum of Years pointed out in *Daniel's Weeks* is very fairly consistent with the Series of Times, and the main Tenour of History. For I cannot but observe, that they who affect Niceness in these Punctilioes, do clash with one another, if not with themselves. And they who in grand Discourses, especially where there is room for variety of Judgments, descend to niceness, and Farthings, are not therefore esteemed the best Accomptants.

I beg of those who have a Prejudice Sect. 26. against our keeping *Christmas* on the 25th of *December*, that they would observe, how the natural Series of the Times led me to fix his Birth in this Month. I solemnly declare, that this follows without any Study, or Projection of my own. Nay, I could not help it without going out of my Road, and leaving what is justly believed the surest Guide in this Labyrinth of Time, the Canon of *Ptolemy*, and the certain Date of the *Augustan Years*. Yet after all, I do not pretend to assign the certain Day of *Christ's Birth* from any Calculations of my own; but only to point out the Month *December*, as best answering to that Deduction of Times, which is, I conceive, the best and surest that

that we can chuse in this Case. The 25th Day in particular could never be discovered to be the true Day, but by the Lease-Rolls taken at *Bethlehem* on our Saviour's Birth, which certainly were lodged in the Capitol at *Rome* and of which some of the antient *Christian* Writers speak. It is agreed by all, I think, that the Observation of the 25th of *December*, as the Day of *Christ*'s Nativity, began first at *Rome*. And certainly the old *Romans* had the best Means of Information in this Particular not by Virtue of the Church of *Rome* being the best Preservatrix of antient Traditions, but because the Lease-Roll might be searched by them with less Difficulty, than by *Christians* living in other Parts of the World. Some Chronologers I have read, were by their own Hypothesis directed to place the Birth of *Christ* on *December* 25th, but out of a mere *Hugonitish* Prejudice have started out of their Way at the very Apprehension of it.

V. The single last Week contains 7 Years, or begins at the first actual Approach of *Christ*, and extends it self to the Destruction of *Jerusalem*.

Sect. 27.

Here I must premise that the main Design of this Prophecy, which was foretold

foretel the Time of *Christ's* Advent, was already attained, at the Conclusion of the 62 Weeks, and the Beginning of the last. The pious Part of the *Jewish* Nation, who were not wanting in their Enquiries concerning the End of the 62 Weeks, and the Notice given from Heaven of the Conception of him that was the Fore-runner of *Christ*, did accordingly look for the promised Redemption. God out of Compassion to the pious *Jews*, and particularly to the poor Captives that were returning to their own Country with Hearts enamored with a holy Zeal to rebuild his Temple, and re-establish his Worship, did before hand measure out to them the Times that were to pass between the present Age, and the Advent of *Christ*; and likewise informed them in general, what were to be the Events and consequences of his coming (all which were reserved to the last Week.) But when once the actual Approach of *Christ* was notified to *Zacharias*, and by him to others, there was no Reason why the Week now to come should be bounded within the narrow Limits of seven Years. The Cause why the past Weeks were all of the same Length, and consisted of this precise Number of Years, was because the *Jews* were accustomed

accustomed to this Way of Account in their Sabbatick Years; and in Order to render the Time capable of being calculated before hand, it was absolutely necessary that the Weeks should be of a certain and equal Number of Years, or else the Prophecy it self had been perfectly useless (saving in this one Thing, that it gave them new Assurance of a *Messia* to come.) It was therefore sufficient that all who thought it worth their Time to be informed in Things of this Nature, might know that the last of the Weeks was now begun, and that the Harbinger of the *Messia* was actually in Embryo, and that therefore the *Messia* himself could not be far behind; and that this Harbinger was to prepare the Way for the Lord, who was coming to his Temple, and so Men needed no farther Light to bring them to *Christ*. It was enough for them to know that all the Events of this last Week should be fulfilled in their several Seasons, and that every one should be informed of the Particulars so soon as they were concerned to know them. Therefore the Extent of this Week was to be known, not from the Words of the Angel, or from any Usage or Way of speaking which then prevailed among the *Jews*, but from the Events only.

It deserves our particular Observation, that this last is styled the ONE, SINGLE, or EMINENT Week. For ONE in the Scripture Language often carrieth a Note of Eminence with it. *Abraham* is distinguished by the Character of ONE Man, *Heb. xi. 12. Jacob, Rom. ix. 10.* and these were to the *Jews*, the most honourable of all the Patriarchs; *Daniel* seems plainly to intend the Son of God by the ONE Man, *Ch. x. 5.* And this was evidently the most eminent of all the LXX Weeks.

1. For the Number, and Greatness of the Events.

2. For the Length of its Duration.

1. The last Week was the most eminent of all the LXX, for the Number and Greatness of the Events ascribed to it, and accomplished in it. Let us first take View of them as they stand in the Text. And it is observable, that the Angel anticipates the Account of these Events in the Beginning of the Message, which he delivered to *Daniel*, by telling him, ver. 24. *Seventy Weeks are determined upon thy People, and thy Holy City,* which is a plain Declaration, that by the end of the seventy Weeks the *Jews* were to cease to be a People, and that *Jerusalem* should no longer be a City. If the People and City had been to continue

tinue a longer, or shorter Time, than the
 End of LXX Weeks, then LXX Weeks
 had not been their determined Time.
 Therefore it must have been in the fe-
 ventieth Week, that they were to be
 disfranchised, and their City levelled.
 LXX Weeks were likewise determined
 for the finishing of Sin, and the sealing up
 of Sin; that is, so much Time is allow-
 ed the Jews for proceeding in their Sins,
 till in this Week they shall have fulfil-
 led the Measure of them, by crucifying
 the *Messia*. God will, till that Time and
 no longer, reserve and with-hold that
 Treasure of Guilt and Punishment, which
 they shall have been treasuring up unto
 themselves against that Day of Wrath,
 See *Job* xiv. 17. The Reader will ob-
 serve, that the Angel begins his Narrative
 with the last Event of the last Week,
 that is, the Destruction of *Jerusalem*.
 And by this took all possible Care, that
 they who undertook to interpret the Pro-
 phesy, should not exclude this most af-
 flictive Event out of the Compass of the
 LXX Weeks; as yet hath generally been
 done by modern Divines. *Tertullian*
 and *Clemens Alexand.* do clearly take it
 into their Account. And it is surprising
 to me, that any Man can think the Pro-
 phesy fulfilled, if this Catastrophe come
 not within the bounds of Time here pre-

fixed

fixed. Then the Angel proceeds, or rather goes back to the other grand, and most beneficial Event of this last Week, that is, the great Sacrifice of *Christ's Body and Blood*. For he tells us, that LXX Weeks are likewise determined for *making Propitiation for Iniquity*, and as it follows, *for bringing in everlasting Righteousness*. The Gospel is often called *Righteousness*, and the *Righteousness of God*, because it gives us the most certain Remedies, both against the Guilt and Dominion of Sin, and affords us the most powerful Assistances, Encouragements, Precepts, and Example of Virtue and Holiness. And this Gospel is *everlasting*, that is, to continue to the End of the World. God intends no other Revelation. The Angel farther tells us, that LXX Weeks are determined for *sealing of Vision, and the Prophet*. His meaning is, that Men must be content to wait for the seventieth Week, before they saw the Visions, and Predictions given out by holy Men of old, confirmed, attested, and fulfilled by the *Messia*, who was the Centre at which they all pointed; and more particularly before they could see this Vision, and the Prophet *Daniel* who was to publish it, to be veracious and authentick (for that is the Design of sealing). He ends this

Verse by adding, that LXX Weeks are determined for anointing the Holy of Holies: And this is the greatest Difficulty in the Verse; especially, because it does not appear, that any Person is ever called *Holy of Holies*, but only those Parts of the Sacrifice, which either were burnt on the Altar, or reserved for the Priest's eating, or the innermost Room of the Tabernacle or Temple: excepting that the Priest's common Apartment is once called by this Name *Num. xviii. 10*. I am inclined to understand it of the whole Gospel System, or *Christian Constitution of Doctrines, Sacraments, and Ordinances*, which were anointed, dedicated, or validated, by the personal Sacrifice of *Christ*, and were and still are anointed by the divine Spirit, which alone can render them salutary to the Souls of Men. And when it was evident, by the whole Tenour of this Prophecy, that the *Jewish System of Worship* was to be set aside, it was very proper and seasonable, that God's Intention of erecting another in its stead should be declared. The Angel having in *ver. 25.* mentioned the Events of the first seven Weeks, namely, the building and rebuilding the Streets and Walls of *Jerusalem*, (and there are no Events beside these in the whole Prophecy, but

what belong to the last Week) he proceeds, in the 26th Verse, to inform us, that *after the sixty two Weeks*, and therefore sometime in the seventieth Week, *the Christ should be cut off, and that he with the Prince to come, should destroy the City and Sanctuary; that they should be cut off as with a Flood, and with Desolations, even unto the End of the decreed War.*

Here again, we have the two great Events of the last Week, in a lively Manner described to us. For as to the sixty two Weeks there is not any one Event ascribed to them, or any of them, in this Prophecy. By the *Prince to come*, is meant the *Roman Emperor*. When the Angel spake these Words, there was no such Prince, or Potentate in Nature. Near 500 Years passed, before there was any Person in the World that was invested with this Character. The Emperor of *Rome*, might justly be called by way of Eminence, **THE PRINCE**, as being the greatest Potentate that had ever been in the World. And every Body knows, that it was by the Army of *Vespasian*, the *Roman Emperor*, commanded by his son *Titus*, that the City, and Temple of *Jerusalem* were finally demolished; but these Emperors and Armies were under the Conduct, and invisible Direction of a more powerful Being, even of the

Christ, the Son of God: For it was he, who by, or with these human Instruments, verified the Words of the Angel in this Text. But then in the 27th Verse, he not only expressly mentions the single Week as the Time, when that which follows was to happen, but in new, and very significant Phrases, expresseth those Events, tho' the whole Verse is much disguised by the Translators, who follow the *Masore*. And first, says he, *the single Week shall cause the covenant with many to grow strong*. This is according to the Letter of the *Hebrew*, as well as *Greek* Text. And this Part of the Prophecy spreads itself thro' this whole Week. *Christ* had been styled *the covenant of the People*, some Ages before this Message was sent to *Daniel*; by *Isaiah* xlii. 6. xlix. 8. He was a *Covenant*, as he was the intended Expiatory Sacrifice, whereby God and Man were to be reconciled to each other. During the first Part of the last Week, he grew in Bulk and Stature, till he arrived at the Age of Manhood; this seems to be the critical meaning of the *Hebrew* Word here used. He grew in Wisdom, and Virtue, till at last he began his Prophetic Office, and with his Minister *John*, entred very great Numbers of Men into Covenant with God by Baptism: And after some Years

he offered his own Body and Blood as a Sacrifice to God; and chose to do it under the Symbols of Bread and Wine, that so his Church might have a standing Sacrifice, in which to commemorate his Sufferings, and to be a perpetual Covenant in his Blood. His Apostles, before the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, had brought vast Multitudes of Men in all Parts of the World into this Covenant: And by the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, his Predictions were so exactly fulfilled, that we cannot doubt, but that was an Inducement for very many more to come into the same sacred Confederacy. Then the Angel goes on to inform *Daniel* of one singular Event of this last Week, not yet mentioned, viz. *For half the Week the Sacrifice and Oblation shall be taken away.* This Translation will approve it self to all that understand the *Hebrew* and *Greek* Text; and is demonstrated to be the true meaning by the Event. During *Christ's* Life, the *Jewish* Sacrifices remained in full Force. By his Death, they were rendered unnecessary for all that believed in him, and utterly unprevailing for all that did not. For these last were devoted to Destruction: Yet these Sacrifices were not wholly laid aside: *St. Paul* himself offered Sacrifice; yet not out of Duty, but to

avoid Offence, *Acts* xxi. 26. and this was less than seven Years before his Death. But the Destruction of the Temple put an End at once to all the *Levitical* Sacrifices; nay, they ceased two Months before the Temple was burnt down, for want of Men to attend them. It was solely against *Titus's* Will that the Sacrifices should cease, when he understood that they wanted Men to assist at them, he desired they might be restored, and sent Word, they should chuse whom they pleased of those he had taken Prisoners, to attend that Service; nay, he desired to save the Temple for the future Performance of this Worship. The *Jews* who pretended the greatest Fondness for this Way of Worship, were, by their Perverseness, the Occasion of the Cessation of the Altar and Sacrifice, and of the Temple it self. It was God's Decree published to the World by *Daniel* 500 and odd Years before, that the Sanctuary should be destroyed, and the Altar and Sacrifice of the *Jews* should cease; and this divine Decree took place in Opposition to the Will and Desire of *Titus*, that was the Commander in chief of the mightiest Force upon Earth. This Altar and Sacrifice did not cease all at once, but was made gradually to be ceasing during the latter

arter Half of this great Week. If Christ
 died in the Passover after he had com-
 pleted the 36th Year of his Life (and
 now will place it sooner,) then scarce
 Half the Week was spent, when the
 first and chief Occasion of the Cessation
 of Sacrifice in the *Jewish* Temple hap-
 pened. For the 15 Months and odd
 Days of this Prophetic Week, which
 had passed before he was born, and the
 three Months and odd Days which passed
 between the last Birth-Day and his Cru-
 cifixion, will not make it much above
 7 Years and a Half, whereas 38 and a
 Half are but one Half of 77. If Christ
 was 37 Years of Age in the *Decem-*
ber immediately foregoing the Passover
 at which he died, which seems to me
 to come nearest to the Truth, then
 these 37 Years, 3 Months and odd Days,
 together with the 15 Months and odd
 Days between the Beginning of the
 Week and his Birth, puts his Death
 some Days beyond the Middle of the
 Week, and so makes him scarce Half
 the Week in causing the *Jewish* Sacri-
 fice to cease. But there is no Occasion
 for a mathematical Exactness for divi-
 ding the Week into Halves. The odd
 Days put together (if we certainly knew
 how many they were) would in all
 probability scarce make an entire Month
 over

over the 38 Years and a Half, and therefore I make no Account of them. And having thus declared an Event, which was one Half of the Week, or thereabouts, in being fulfilled, he descended to the next Event of this Week, which God thought fit to have foretold, and it was this: *The Abomination of Desolation shall stand in the holy Place.* *Abomination* was a known Name for an *Idol*, or an *Image* made to be worshipped, in the *Jews* Language. The *Idol of Desolation* was the Standard of the *Roman* Armies, so called, because it was adorned with the Images of their false Gods, to whom they paid divine Honour, and which, by Reason of the Success with which their Armies were usually attended, carried Desolation and Destruction to all Places where they met with Opposition. When *Vitellius* was marching his *Roman* Forces against *Aretas*, through the Country some Years before, in the Reign of *Tiberius*, the *Jews* solemnly protested against it, as a Thing unlawful, that Idols (such as were to be seen in the *Roman* Standards, or Banners) should appear in their Country. This is a clear Proof that these Standards were an *Abomination*, and the *Jews* soon after felt them to be an *Abomination of Desolation*. Our Saviour in

Matthew

Matthew's Gospel, chap. xxiv. 14—16. And forewarned his Disciples, that *when they saw this Abomination standing in the holy Place, or on holy Ground, they that were in Judea fly to the Mountains.* *Vespasian Gallus*, General of Syria under the Roman Emperor, about 4 Years before the general Destruction, laid Siege to *Jerusalem* with his Roman Legions, and won Part of the City, and thereupon unquestionably fixed his Standard on holy Ground; for the whole City of *Jerusalem* is styled *Holy* in this very prophecy, and in other Places of holy scripture, and the *Christians* taking this Holy Warning, retired to *Petta*, a small City in a mountainous Country beyond *Jordan*; and by this means, when *Titus* set down before the City with his Army, the *Christians* were all out of the Reach of Danger. It is frivolous to object Against this, that *Gallus* did not lay a formal Siege against *Jerusalem*, or entirely begirt it, which seems to be implied in our Saviour's Way of Expression, *when ye see Jerusalem encompassed with Armies*, *Luke xxi. 20.* They are too rigid Expositors, who will never allow a Word when taken in any Sense but what is most strict and exact. Our Saviour not only calls this Standard the *Abomination of Desolation*, but lets us

us know, that he took this Expression from the Prophet *Daniel*, and adds, *him that readeth understand*, which implies two Particulars, *viz.* *First*, That what the Prophet speaks in this Place was to be understood concerning the Destruction of *Jerusalem* by the Romans of which our Saviour was here speaking and, *Secondly*, That any Jew of common Discretion, who could read this Prophecy of *Daniel*, might, with due Attention understand it too; for otherwise, *Christ's* Admonition had been to no Purpose. Then follow the last Words of the Angel's Message, *viz.* *Even to the Consummation of the Time Consumption shall be added to the Desolation*: The whole Clause is obscure and perplexed as to its Syntax in *Greek*, as well as *Hebrew*; but as to its meaning, clear and plain; mean fully fixed to express the utmost Horror and Confusion, which is most naturally express'd by an unartificial Accumulation of Words. And upon the whole, I conceive it to be altogether as evident, that the Destruction of *Jerusalem* comes within the Compass of the last Week, as that the Death of *Christ* doth so; and that this is plainly asserted in the *Hebrew*, as well as *Greek*. And 'tis in vain for Men to pry into the abstruser Part of the Prophecy, if the

may not be permitted to see what is self-evident and obvious. And by this we may discern the Number and Greatness of the Events of the last Week, which are in Sum, the Approach of Christ, his Birth, Growth, prophetick Office, Mediatorship, Abolition of the Jewish Sacrifices, the Jews filling up the Measure of their Sins, and the final Destruction of Jerusalem in the Reign of *Vespasian*, by the Roman Armies.

2. As to the Extent of the LXXth Week, it is easily discovered. For we have nothing to do but to cast up the sum of Years from the 23d of *Augustus* to the 2d of *Vespasian*: For on the 8th of September this Year this Tragedy was far brought to a Conclusion, that *Augustus* saw no farther Occasion for his stay, but went and wintered at *Casarea*, and in the Spring returned to *Rome*. This second Year of *Vespasian* was the 6th from the 23d of *Augustus*, when the 62 Weeks ended, but by the 8th of September, when the City was entirely reduced, and the Walls destroyed, the Temple had been some Weeks before, the 77th Year was begun. And they who love Concinnity in Numbers, may better approve of this last Year than the former, for the Conclusion of the Week. I am of Opinion, that the

LXX

LXX Years of Captivity are called *Week*, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 20, 21. and if it had been there said, *Till the Land had finished her Week*, instead of the Words, *Till the Land had enjoyed her Sabbaths*, our Translation had been more perfect. For the full Meaning of the Writer I take to be this, that the Land should have a Week of LXX Years Repose to make Amends for her Loss of her Sabbath every seventh Year; and it has been already observed, that *Sabbaths* in the plural Number, often signifies a *Week* (See Sect. 7.) And sure 77 Years may be justly called a *Week* as 70; and the Scripture Climax from seven, is seven times seven. And it is indeed fit, that what is called a *Week*, should turn on the Number Seven. And we may find farther Cause to take in the 77th Year when it is remembered that it was the Month *Ab* (answering partly to the Roman *July*, partly to *August*) in the Year, before *Turnus Rufus* ploughed up the Foundations of the Temple, if we may believe *Maimonides*. And if the Prophecy of *Daniel* were fulfilled before this was done, yet that of our Saviour was not fulfilled, till by this Means came to pass, that *one Stone of the Temple was not left upon another*. Nay, it was *March* or *April* in this 77th Year before

before the well-fortified Castle of * *Ma-*
ada was taken and levell'd; where above
100 Persons kill'd themselves, or wilfully
caused themselves to be kill'd by their
associates, and this was the proper Epi-
logue of such a long Scene of Blood and
Misery.

There is a very pertinent Corollary
to be made from this Discourse, in Re-
lation to the Text in which our Savi-
our is supposed to declare, that he him-
self was ignorant of the Day and Hour
of the Destruction of *Jerusalem*. I take
for certain, that the Words were pri-
marily meant of the Destruction of *Je-*
rusalem, and of the Day of Judgment
consequently only; I mean, as the first
was intended by God to be a Resem-
blance or Prefiguration of the second.
The Text in which *Christ* is imagined
to intimate his own Ignorance is *Mark*
xiii. 32. In the Verse next but one
before this, he says, *This Generation*
shall not pass, till all these Things be
fulfilled. These Words determine *Christ's*
Meaning primarily to the Destruction
of *Jerusalem*; because this did happen
before the present Generation of Men
was dead and gone, which cannot be
said of the Day of Judgment. And
there is no Reason to believe, that our

* See *Joseph. de Bell. L. vii. c. 8.*

Saviour

Saviour had passed to another Subject when he pronounced the Words in the 32d Verse, which are now under Consideration, all that comes between this, *Heaven and Earth shall, or may pass away, but my Words shall not pass away.* Then it was very proper and pertinent for him to add, as he did, *But no Man, nor even the Angels which are in Heaven, nor the Son, but the Father hath decreed that Day, and the Hour, or hath decreed concerning that Day or Hour.* The Greek Word here used (I mean *μεν*) loseth its Emphasis if it be not rendered by the English *concerning*. And he who says, *no Man knows concerning that Day*, will scarcely be allowed to speak good Sense, but *no Man hath decreed concerning that Day* is more just and agreeable. The Words *know* doth often in Scripture carry the Sense of *decreeing*, or *determining*. The Reader hath some Instances of it in the * Margin. And it is evident from the

* *Exod. xxxiii. 5.* God says to the whole Nation of the Israelites, *Put off thy Ornament; from thee, that I may know that is, determine what to do unto thee.*

Jerem. xv. 15. That Prophet says to God, *Revenge of my Persecutors---Know that for thy sake I have suffered Reproof; that is, let thy Vengeance on my Persecutors be taken as may be sufficient to determine this Truth, that it is for thy sake I am reproached.*

John vi. 6. Jesus himself knew (Gr. *ᾔδει*), had determined) what he would do.

foregoing

foregoing Discourse, that God had many Ages before decreed the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, and had determined a certain Time for that great Event. The Angel tells *Daniel* of a *Word*, or *Decree*, which had come forth, and the first Clause in that Decree was, *Seventy Weeks* were determined upon thy People, and thy Holy City. And this is sufficient to justify the Translation now given of our Saviour's Words. And therefore I shall farther add a just Paraphrase of them, viz. "But though I call this Prediction of the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, My Words, yet do not from thence conclude, that this Decree or Sentence of Extermination took its Rise from any one, save God the Father: Neither *Daniel*, who first published this Decree to the *Jews*, nor the Angel, who first made it known to *Daniel*, nor any other Angel, nor I my self, who have now repeated, and more largely explained it, was the Author of the Decree it self; it proceeded originally from the Divine Father only." I shall only farther make the following Remarks.

1. It does not follow, that our Saviour was ignorant of the precise Time when *Jerusalem* should be destroy'd, when the Day of Judgment should come,

come, because he declares that he was not the first Author of the Sentence of Destruction passed against that City, nor of the final Judgment. He might be, and undoubtedly was conscious to this Decree, though the Father first enacted or established it. *Christ* was stiled by *Isaia*, *The Angel of the great Counsel*, and nothing was therefore concealed from this divine Secretary, though the Knowledge of it was communicated to him, as was the Divinity it self, from God the Father. I ought to advertise my Reader, that this Character of *Christ* given him by *Isaia*, is defaced by the *Masorites*, and consequently by our Translators. But it still stands in our *Greek Bibles*, *Isa. ix. 6.*

2. It is true, our Saviour did never point out the precise Time of the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, nor did he ever think fit to let even his bosom Disciples into this Secret. But plainly tells them all, *It was not for them to know the Times and the Seasons.* He thought it necessary for them as for others to be kept in Suspence as to this Point, thereby to excite them to a vigilant and devout Frame of Mind; *Watch and pray, say he, because ye know not when the Time is,* *Matt. xiii. 33.* But he brought them nearer to the Knowledge of the precise Time

Time than they ever had been before. For he declares it should happen before that Generation passed away, as it accordingly did; whereas, by the Decree published by *Daniel*, the Space of Time contained in the last of the Weeks was left undetermined. And this I conceive, explains what our Saviour says of *the Days being shortened*. By the divine Decree revealed to *Daniel* the last Week, and consequently the Time of the Destruction of *Jerusalem* had no certain bounds set to it, as hath been observed before, *Sect.* 24. All of the *Jews*, who believed in *Christ*, could not be ignorant that *LXIX* Weeks of the *LXX* had been finished at least 37 Years before, and that so many Years of the last Week were already passed, when *Christ* spake these Words: And from this they were sure that this was to be a Week of a very extensive Duration, and the End of it hid from their View. But now *Christ* promising that this Generation should not pass till all was fulfilled, circumscribed it within some Bounds, though not within a certain Number of Years. If *Jerusalem* had stood 20 Years longer, somewhat more, even to the Beginning of *Trajan's* Reign, what our Saviour said had yet been verified: For the Apostle *John* lived to that Time, and

therefore all the Generation of Men that were living, when our Saviour said this, was not then extinct. But the Days were shortened for *the sake of the Elect*, that is, of the *Christians*. For the ruling Part of the *Jewish* Nation were the most violent, constant Enemies to the Church of *Christ*; and the Temple-Worship was the most strong Obstacle to the Prevalence of the Gospel. And therefore, when the *Jews* ceased to be a Nation, and their Temple and its Worship was abolished, *Christians* enjoyed more Ease and Safety in their Profession than before, and the *Christian* Worship and Doctrine met with better Reception. Thus the Decree of the LXX Weeks gives Light to those remarkable Words of *Christ*, and the Words of *Christ* support the Account we have given of the LXX Weeks.

Upon the whole, I cannot but, with all Sincerity, make my Acknowledgements to a gracious God, for his good Providence in making known his Intentions concerning these great Events so many Ages before, and for having led us such sufficient Means, at this Day, coming to the Knowledge of the true Sense of this most glorious Prophecy notwithstanding all the Artifices of the unbelieving *Jews*, and the Easiness of learning

learned *Christians* in permitting their Ar-
tifices to pass without Controul. And I
cannot but declare my self so well satisfi-
ed with the Grounds on which I have
proceeded in this Treatise, that if I had
hitherto lived an Infidel, yet the Convicti-
on wrought in me by a just Considerati-
on of the certain Sense, and perfect Com-
pletion of this divine Oracle, is so full,
that I should from this Time forward
think it my Duty to do and suffer all
that human Nature, supported with di-
vine Grace, can enable me to do and
suffer, rather than forfeit my Faith in
my God and Saviour.



Astronomical Canon of *Ptolemy*,Referred to in the foregoing *Explanation*.

	Years of Reign.		Years of Reign.
Nabonassar	14	Arogon	
Nadius	2	Darius Codomanus	
Chinzirus, and Porus	5		
Jugæus	5	Alexander Magnus	
Mardoc-Empadus	12	Philippus Aridæi	
Arkianus	5	Alexander Ægus	
Interregnum I.	2		
Belibus	3	Ptolemæus Lagi	
Apronadius	6	Ptolemæus Philadelphi	
Rigebelus	3	Ptolemæus Euergetes	
Meseffimordacus	4	Ptolemæus Philopater	
Interregnum II.	8	Ptolemæus Epiphanus	
Affar-Addinus	13	Ptolemæus Philometor	
Saofducheus	20	Ptolemæus Euergetes II.	
Chyniladanus	22	Ptolemæus Soter	
Nabopallasarus	21	Dionysius	
Nabocolassarus, Nebu- chadnezzar	43	Cleopatra	
Ilvarodamus, Evilmerodach	2	Augustus	
Niricassolassarus	4	Tiberius	
Nabonadius, Belshazzar	17	Caius	
		Claudius	
Cyrus	9	Nero	
Cambyfes	8	Vespasianus	
Darius Hystaspes (31)	36	Titus	
Xerxes	21	Domitianus	
Artaxerxes Longiman. (46)	41	Nerva	
Darius Nothus	19	Trajanus	
Artaxerxes Mnemon	46	Hadrianus	
Ochus	21	Antoninus	

TWO
DISSERTATIONS
ON
The Nature of GOD,
AND HIS
TRUE WORSHIP.

JOHN IV. 24.

*GOD is a Spirit, and they that worship
him, must worship him in Spirit and
Truth.*



*Of the Nature of GOD,
and his True Worship.*

DISSERTATION I.

JOHN iv. 24.

GOD is a Spirit.

I Shall here endeavour to shew you,

I. What a Spirit is.

II. That God is a Spirit.

I. I am to shew what a Spirit is. And upon this Occasion I must speak wholly to your Reasons, and Judgments, not to your Affections, while I consider,

1. The Name. 2. The Thing.

1. The Name *Spirit*, if you only regard the original Signification of the Word, imports no more than barely *Wind*, or *Breath*. And this is true, not only of the *English* Word *Spirit*, but of the *Hebrew Ruach*, and the *Greek Pneuma*: We must not therefore conclude, that the Word is always to be understood in this
first

first literal Sense, and consequently that whatever is call'd a Spirit is no more than a Breath, or Wind. There is no greater Occasion of Error in Divinity, than this of arguing from Names to Things, or supposing that the Nature of Beings is fully express'd in those Words by which they are call'd in Holy Scripture, or in common Language. *Malac* does in its proper, primary Signification, denote a Man sent on some Message: Yet it is very certain, that in many Places of Scripture it does likewise signify a most noble heavenly Creature, which we commonly call an Angel. *Sheol* originally implies no more than a Grave, or Pit; yet in the sacred Writings it is sometimes taken for that Place, or State, where the Souls of Men separated from their Bodies are deposited till the Day of Judgment. As therefore they would be guilty of a gross Mistake, who should undertake to prove that an Angel is no more than a Man sent on some Errand, because his Name does necessarily import no more; or that the Place, where Souls are detained till the Day of Judgment, is only some hollow Receptacle under Ground, because the Hebrew Word signifies no more in its first and most proper Acceptation; so their Error is not less absurd, who are willing to fancy, that a Spirit denotes nothing but

Breath

Breath, or *Wind*, because it is confess'd that this is the first, and most proper Sense of the Word. And tho' they who believe the Soul dies with the Body, are very fond of this way of arguing; yet methinks, when they consider, that God himself is call'd a Spirit, this should abate their Confidence, and convince them, that a Spirit, notwithstanding its Name, may be an immortal Being.

The Truth is, the principal Use of all the known Languages was for Men's communicating their Thoughts to one another, in the Affairs and Concerns of common Life; therefore all Languages, if you consider their original Condition, wanted Words to express the Things of Religion, and of another World. They who were first sent to preach divine Truth, were therefore obliged to give a new Sense to such Words as they found in use among the People to whom they were sent; and it was thought sufficient, that there was some Resemblance between the received Sense, and that which was now to be stamp'd upon them. Thus in the Case before us, because there was no single Word in the *Hebrew*, or *Greek*, which did of itself signify an invisible, thinking, self-moving Being, therefore they took a Word which vulgarly signified *Wind*, to denote this sort of Beings: And it is sufficient,

ficient, that there was some Likeness between the Thing of old hereby meant, and what was now further to be signified by it. And one Cause of the Obscurity of Scriptures is, that it is not always easy to determine, when a Word is to be taken in its primary, and when in its secondary Sense.

I am sensible an Opinion has prevailed among us, that the *Hebrew* Tongue, being, as was supposed, that which God taught *Adam*, or which he himself by the great Fecundity of his own Mind invented, while he was in a State of perfect Rectitude, before the Fall, must therefore be fully expressive of the Nature of all things, and consequently not liable to the Defect of which I am speaking. But I have reason to believe, that few Men of Learning do now esteem *Hebrew* to be the Tongue used by *Adam*; and all that are in any measure acquainted with it, cannot but be sensible, that the *Hebrew* Names of Things do as little fit their Natures, as those of any other Language.

But there is another great Occasion of Mistake in the Signification of Words, which is, that People, in their common Discourse, do often take a Word in a Sense very different from its proper Meaning, as well as from that Meaning which the Masters of Religion have added to it. Of
this

this we have a notable Instance in the Word which is now under our Consideration: For common People do by a Spirit usually mean a Spectre, or Phantom, or the Soul of some dead Person, not as it really is in it self, invisible, but as making its appearance in the Resemblance of an Human Body. Our Saviour, in Condescension to his Apostles, was once pleased to use the Word in this Sense, when he said to them, after his Resurrection, *Handle me, and see, for a Spirit hath not flesh, and bones, as ye see me have.* Luk. xxiv. 39. But the Word Spirit, when used in the secondary, and most sublime Sense, signifies nothing that is Bodily, that can be seen, heard, or felt. And I have said thus much concerning the Name, to guard you from any Apprehension, or Conceit, of a Spirit's being something that may be perceiv'd by our outward Senses: For though the Word do originally signify Wind, or Breath, and, in vulgar Use, an Apparition; yet here in my Text, and in many other Texts of Holy Scripture, it has clearly another meaning.

2. I am to shew what Thing, or Being, is here denoted by it. And it is very evident, that a Spirit signifies such a Being only, as has the Power of Thinking. God, Angels, and the Souls of Men are thinking Beings. I take no notice of Beasts;

Beasts, because, if they have any thing that justly deserves the Name of Thought, yet it certainly comes exceeding short of the Understanding of Men, much more of Angels, and of God himself.

Of Angels we know nothing, but only what is revealed in Holy Scripture: There they are often call'd *Spirits*, and are represented as Creatures of great Knowledge, and very bright Intellectuals; they are there often said to have been sent on Messages from God to Men: Then they always appear'd in the Figure and Shape of Men. It was absolutely necessary that they should appear in some Shape upon such occasions: For otherwise they could not appear at all, so as to be seen, or heard, by those to whom they were sent; and it must be allowed, that it was most fitting that they should appear in the shape of Men, because this is least frightful, or astonishing, and qualify'd them to deliver their Messages in a more agreeable familiar manner. But we must take heed, that we do not from thence conclude, that they really have Bodies like ours. If they have any Bodies at all, they are certainly by infinite Degrees more fine, or thin, more nimble, and active, more strong, and vigorous, than such as are made of Flesh and Blood; and their humane Figure, in which they used to render

der themselves visible to Men, could not be any part of their Nature, much less of their spiritual Essence.

But surely, if we can know any one thing better than another, it is our selves. We have indeed some Knowledge of our Bodies, but especially of our external Shape. This does not at all help us to form our Idea of God; for tho' Man was made in the Image of God, yet not as to his Body. Even the *Jews* had a sufficient caution given them as to this Point, when they were told, that God was not to be represented by any Similitude, or Bodily Shape, or Figure, nor even by *the likeness of man, or woman*. God is a Spirit, and the Soul of Man is a Spirit; it is therefore in this that we resemble God; purely in our Souls; as they are distinct from the Body, and from all Bodily Things.

Deut. iv.
15, 16.

Moses, to describe God's finishing the Creation of Man, says, *He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life*. But it seems very irrational to suppose, that the Divine Writer meant no more by this, than that God gave him the Faculty of Respiration; for the Beasts have this in as great Perfection as Men: And I think it clear, that it was *Moses's* Intention to inform us, that God imparted to Man something more than he did to the Beasts: For all that he says of their Creation is, that
God

Gen. xi. 7.

Gen. i. 24. *God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind -- and God made the beast after his kind, and the cattle after their kind.* But he speaks of God, in the brief History of his creating Man, as infusing into his Earthy Body somewhat that was immediately from himself; *God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.* When the Holy Scripture gives the Creator of all Things the Character of being the *Living God*, there is certainly somewhat more meant by it, than that God exists, and acts (which was yet more than could be said in truth of many Heathen Gods, who were but mere Names, and Phantoms). The Meaning undoubtedly is, that God exists, and acts, in a most excellent and perfect manner: For the same Reason it is most rational, by God's *breathing into man the breath of life*, to understand thus much, that God by a more immediate Application of his Power to the Body of Adam, newly formed out of the Earth, communicated to it a Spirit, that did in some measure resemble his own Divine Nature; such as could not immediately be given by second Causes, but must come originally from himself alone: And if the Hebrew Tongue had afforded more particular, distinct Words, and Terms, we are not to doubt but *Moses* had used them upon

upon this occasion. And I am persuaded the Apocryphal Writer hath excellently well express'd *Moses's* Meaning in the *Greek* Language, which is thus translated into English: *God inspir'd into Adam an active Soul, and breath'd into him a living Spirit.* Wisd. xv. 11.

And I conceive, that *St. Paul* does thus explain *Moses*, when he calls God *the Father of Spirits*; that is, he is in a more peculiar manner the Author of the Souls of Men, than of any other Beings in this visible World; and that they do in a more peculiar manner resemble him: they are *God's Offspring*, as it is express'd *Acts xvii. 28.* Heb. xii. 9.

From what has been said we may know, not only to whom the Name of Spirit belongs, *viz.* to God, Angels, and the Souls of Men; but we have a certain means, by which we may come at the knowledge of the Nature of a Spirit: For since our Souls are Spirits, we cannot be ignorant of the Nature of Spirits, unless we are perfect Strangers to our selves. It is certain that our own Minds (especially if they be pure from wilful Sin) are the most perfect Images of God, that are any where to be found here on Earth; therefore the sure, and indeed the only way to come at the Knowledge of God, as a spiritual Being, is to reflect upon, and to contemplate our own Souls, and to discover what are the

principal Qualities, which belong to them. And by turning the Eye of our Mind inward, and letting it take a view of it self, it will easily discern these four most observable Properties of its own Nature as

1. That it has the Power of Thinking.
2. That it feels, and perceives, whatever affects our Body.
3. That it can move the Body.
4. That it acts freely, and of choice.

You may in your own Thoughts object, that you shall be never the nearer to the Knowledge of a Spirit by the Properties here mention'd, except I could also inform you what Shape, Colour, Dimensions, Breadth, and Width, the Soul of a Man may be: But he that asks such a Question, only discovers his Ignorance of the Nature of a Spirit. For the Properties last mention'd, don't belong to a Spirit, but to a Body; and Body, and Spirit, are two distinct sorts of Substances. It is certain that God could not be a Spirit, if a Spirit had any of these Properties. No Christian can surely be so gross, as to imagine, that God is of any Shape, Colour, or Figure, or is of any certain Dimensions. And if therefore the Soul of Man had any such Properties as these, it could no longer be a Spirit. Indeed an Angel, or departed Soul, may

an appearance to us, they must for the present be cloathed with a Body; but then that Body can be no part of the Angel, or Soul, no more than a Garment is a part of the Man who wears it. In a word, as God is himself invisible, so no other Spirits can of themselves, and in their own Nature, be seen by mortal Eyes.

But since our Souls, as distinguish'd from our Bodies, and from every Limb, or part of them, are Spirits, therefore we cannot take a better course to get the knowledge of a Spirit, than by considering the principal Properties of our own Souls; for we may be justly thought to know more of our selves, than of any other thing else whatsoever. And since our Souls are Spirits, therefore the most certain, and direct way to come at the knowledge of the Nature of other Spirits, is to contemplate those Spirits of ours, with which we have so intimate an Acquaintance; therefore I proceed distinctly to consider the Properties of our Souls as before mention'd.

1. The first Property of a Soul is, that it has the Power of Thinking. That Being, or Substance within us, by which we apprehend, conceive, deliberate, resolve, judge, argue, conclude, remember, that is our Soul; and it is by these Properties, that we prove it to be a Spirit:

And whatever Being thinks, in this, or in a more perfect manner, that is properly call'd by this Name. It is the Soul only that thinks: And this is the Distinction that is most observable between Body and Spirit; that the first has not Thought, the other hath. Our Skin, Bones, Muscles, Nerves, Blood, and even the finest parts of our Blood (which Physicians improperly call Spirits) these, and all other parts of our Bodies, whether we consider them separately, or as united together, are all void of Thought, which is the peculiar Prerogative of the Mind, or Soul; a Substance distinguish'd from the Body, and every part of it, and which Solomon calls the Spirit of Man, and says

Prov. xx.
27.

It is the Candle of the Lord.

2. Another principal Property of our Soul is, that it perceives, or feels, whatever affects the Body; it is conscious to all the pleasing, or displeasing Strokes that are given to the remotest parts of our Limbs: It feels the Fire which warms our Hands and Feet; and the Lance that wounds our Arms and Legs.

3. Another admirable Property of the Soul is, that it can move the Body: The Soul resolves to walk, and the Feet, and other Parts, immediately move, and carry our Bodies to the Place design'd: The Mind commands the Hands to work, and

our Hands immediately obey, and perform the Task laid upon them. There is, perhaps, nothing in Nature more strange to a Man that duly considers it, than that Bodies of such a Bulk as ours, should be moved by a Thought; and that in order to put our Limbs, and our whole Bodies in Motion, we need only speak with our Minds; and without any more ado, every Limb and Part performs its proper Office, moves, bends, and turns itself into as many several Postures, as the Business requires. And tho' the Body often continues in a State of Rest for many Hours together; yet, by the Will and Pleasure of the Soul, it is raised up again, and employ'd in such Actions as she directs.

4. The only remaining Property of our Souls, as they are Spirits, which I shall now mention, is that they act freely, or have the Privilege of chusing, or refusing; and in this it differs from all things that consist of Body, or Matter only. A River goes always forward in the same Course or Channel, being press'd on by that Mass of Waters which are perpetually flowing with Force from the Fountain-Head; but never moves backward, or out of its wonted way, till it be turn'd out of its Course by some external Art or Violence: And while the Stream continues its natural Course, 'tis not by Choice, but Constraint.

On the other side, our Bodies are moved by our Souls, or by the Command of our Wills; and the same Power of the Soul which puts them into Motion, can stop or alter it at Discretion: And it is this Property of our Souls, that makes us capable of performing virtuous Actions, and of being rewarded for them. No Man thinks it commendable, or rewardable, to see a Stone to fall downward, or in the Flame to mount upward, or in the Iron and Load-stone to come together, and keep close to each other, if they are not separated by some outward Cause; because none of these Creatures chuse these Actions or Motions, nor indeed can they forbear them, but are carried to them by a blind, tho' strange and unaccountable Impulse of Nature. But it is a great Commendation in a rational Soul, to be ready and cheerful in moving the Body to do Acts of Devotion to God, and of Justice and Charity to Man: It is praise-worthy and rewardable, for a Spirit that has the Power of chusing and refusing, to stretch out the Hand to give an Alms to the Poor, or to cause the Feet to run in order to give Succour or Relief to another who wants it, because it proceeds from a Principle of Religion, or Reason, without which the Man would suffer his Neighbor to perish, rather than put his Body or Limbs in motion.

Th

Thus by reflecting on our own Souls, we have gotten a tolerable Notion of a Spirit; as clear a Notion at least as we have of any thing else: We know four very considerable Properties of it; and we know nothing but Properties in any Being whatsoever. A Spirit is what has the Power of Thought, 'tis what perceives, or apprehends any thing within the Sphere or Compass of its Activity, 'tis what can move Body, and acts freely, or has a Power of chusing and refusing. This leads me,

II. In the next place to shew, that God is such a Spirit; nay, he is such a Spirit in a most eminent Manner: And to form the best Idea of him that we can, to every one of these four Properties we must add the Manner in which he possesseth them, that is, infinitely, or perfectly.

I. God is a thinking, knowing, and remembering Being. But he thinks not in that defective Manner that we do, who can consider but some one little Object at once, but at one single View discerns all Things that ever were, or can be. He knows not after the Manner of Men, who are certainly ignorant of the inward Essence of all things whatsoever; and there is Reason to believe, that there are more things that are entirely hid from us, than there are of those which do, in any mea-

sure, come under our Notice: But God's Knowledge extends itself to all the greatest, and the most minute Particulars; not only to the Outside, or Surface, of apparent Properties, but to those which to us seem the most abstruse and dark! All things are open and naked in his Sight. And whereas our Memories contain only the imperfect Footsteps of some few things done some Years, or Ages past; on the other side, all things are present to this all-knowing Mind.

2. God is a perceiving Spirit. Our Souls have a Sense, or Perception of what is done to the Body, and we can see and hear what is at some Distance from us. And yet even the Perception we have is often taken from us by Palsies, and other Diseases, and we have no Sense but what is liable to an Eclipse; and while we enjoy it, in the most perfect manner that our Natures will allow, it often gives us much Pain and Disquiet. Nothing but what is gross does at all affect our Senses; and we have little or no Perception even of the Air that surrounds us, and in which we breathe, unless it be put into a violent Agitation; or of the Motions, or natural Actions, performed in our vital Parts, or our Arteries, Veins, and Bowels. But God is an infinite Spirit, conscious, and equally conscious to every thing that is done

done in every part of the Universe; and does as perfectly perceive what is done from one End of it to the other, as we feel the Fire that burns our Feet, or the Lance that wounds our Arm; tho' with this Difference, that nothing can hurt or discompose him. He feels without Pain, he perceives without any Uneasiness. And this most perfect Perception is not liable to be impair'd, by any Disease or Infir-
mity.

3. God is a Spirit, that can move Body or Matter. In this too our Souls have a faint Resemblance of God. We can, after a sort, move our own Bodies to do such Business as is necessary for our Subsistence. Our Soul can at pleasure move our Limbs, or command them to rest; I mean, it can do it, while the Body is in Health and Vigour. Disease, or Age, sooner or later, renders our Limbs unable to obey the Command of our Wills: And while we are in our best State of Youth and Strength our Souls have no Power over our Stomach, Heart, or other Vitals: 'Tis to no purpose to lay an Injunction upon our Blood, to circulate with a greater or lesser degree of Swiftness; or upon our Entrails, to digest our Meat with more or less Expedition. But God is that most perfect Spirit, who is the *first Mover* of all things, and in whom we ourselves live, and move, and

and have our Being. By his Power of moving Matter, and of impressing what Laws of Motion he pleased upon it, he made this beautiful Frame of Things, which we now behold; and, by continuing such Laws of Motion as are proper for every part of the World, he is its Preserver; and by his Power of suspending, varying, and revoking those Laws, he is its Governor. For every part of Nature cannot but obey his Almighty Will, and move, or stop, at his irresistible sovereign Command.

4. God is a Spirit, that acts with a most perfect Freedom. The Soul of Man is so far free, that it cannot be forced to sin, without its own Consent; and that the Body cannot move to do any thing that is morally good or bad, without its Direction; and the Soul, by using this Power with Prudence and Discretion, is capable of rendering itself, by God's Grace, eternally happy. But alas! if we consider, that this Freedom of our Wills is, for the most part, exercised in chusing the evil, and refusing the good; and that, thro' the present Pravity of our Natures, we are mostly bent to Sin and Folly; it must be confess'd, that, through our Perverseness, this Privilege of the Freedom of our Wills does indeed become a Snare to us. But that Freedom of God's Will, which is directed

rected by the most perfect Wisdom and Purity, is indeed the greatest Perfection of the Divine Nature, because by this he is always determin'd to chuse what is best.

And thus we discern God to be an infinite perfect Spirit, who thinks most clearly, who perceives all things, who is the first perpetual Mover of Matter, who acts freely, and always for the best.

Thus by viewing or reflecting on our own Souls, we have learn'd the Idea of a Spirit; and, by enlarging this Idea of a Spirit, we have attained to a Notion of an Almighty and Omniscient Spirit. It must indeed be confess'd, that our Idea of God is imperfect, and so is our Knowledge of every thing else: For we cannot look into the internal Essence of any the least Creature, that we have before our Eyes; we only know some of their Properties. And I can see no reason to think, that we may not have as good an Idea of a Spirit, as we have of a Body; for we certainly do as perfectly perceive the Properties of our own Souls, as we can the Properties of any one part belonging to us. Therefore,

1. My first Inference drawn from the foregoing Discourse is, that Men do without Grounds complain of the Difficulty of knowing the Nature of a Spirit, and consequently of God, the infinite Spirit. For is there any Man, who does not know what

what it is to think, or perceive, to judge, will, determine, or remember? Can any Man be unsensible of the Perceptions he has, when he feels Pain or Pleasure? or be so unobserving, that he takes no notice of his Soul's moving the Body, or setting his Limbs at work? Can any Man doubt whether there be something within him, which chuses or refuses whatever is proposed to him? Nay, is there any thing in Nature, of which we can say, we know it better than we know what it is to think, perceive, to move our Bodies, to resolve, to accept, or reject? Do not we know the Meaning of this by an inward Sensation of our own Minds, and more clearly than we can conceive any thing that is not so perfectly within us? And is there any Man so void of common Sense, as not to apprehend what it is? If then we have an Idea of thinking, perceiving, putting our Bodies in Motion, and of determining our own Wills, or Choice, it is evident we cannot be ignorant of the Nature of a Spirit: For we know these four principal Properties of it: And we know nothing in the World any further, than that it has some certain Properties, and when we know *them*, we know the Things themselves, as well as we are capable of knowing them in this present State. I conceive there is no outward Thing which seems

more

more easily, and clearly to be known by every Man, than natural Light. And what is that we know of it, but that it is the means by which our Eyes discern all other bodily Things, that it extends itself to all parts of this World of ours at one, and the same time, unless it be intercepted by some hard, or dark Body, and that it cannot be divided into parts? Does any Man think that he has a perfect Notion of Wood? or Stone? let him examine himself, what his Notion of them is, and it will amount at last to this, that they are Substances that have Width and Breadth, that they are both of them hard, and of various Colours; that one of them is harder than the other, and is by Nature lodged upon, or in the Earth; that the other does by degrees grow out of it, that both are fit for Building, and such like Purposes, and one of them for Jewel. Other Properties may be discover'd in them besides those that I have mention'd, and so there may in Spirits also. But we do not more know the inward Essence of Light, Wood, or Stone, than we do of Souls, or of other Spirits. That which causes the Difficulty in forming the Idea of a Spirit, is this; that we converse mostly with bodily things, and therefore are used to conceive every thing as having Width, or Breadth; and Spirits may possibly

sibly have these Properties too, but that is more than we certainly know. And if they have not, why should it be more strange, that Spirits should want Width, or Breadth, than that Light, Wood, and Stones, should want Thought, Perception, the Power of moving other Things, without Compulsion, and of Chusing and Refusing? Therefore no Man ought to say, that he can have no Notion, or Knowledge of a Spirit, since he may know so many of its Properties.

2. So long as we know what a Spirit is, we cannot want a Notion of God, and as perfect a Notion, as we are in this Life capable of receiving. If we know any thing, if we think at all, we cannot but apprehend what Thinking and Knowing is; we cannot but apprehend what they are, I mean, with the greatest ease, and without making enquiry of any one beside our selves. We know what it is to think, without any Labour and Pains, without any help of Books, Study, or prospective Glasses, directly, and as I may so say, by Intuition. And if we understand what it is to think, we have taken the most necessary step towards the knowing of God, who is a Thinking Being; and is That, and more than That to the Universe, that our Souls are to our Bodies. If we might suppose, that

a Man

a Man, for the twenty, or thirty, first Years of his Life, had been confin'd in a Cave or dark Room, and never seen any Light but that of a Candle; but should be told of an exceeding large lightsome Body at a vast distance from us, which yet enlighten'd more than half of this Globe of Earth at one and the same time; and should be inform'd how many Countries of many hundred Miles extent, and many thousand distant from each other, did for many Hours together do their Business by it; this Man might, from the Notion he had of a Candle, form to himself a tolerable Idea of that most glorious Star the Sun. Or as a Man who has been born, and always lived in a midland Country, and never seen any larger Water, than that of an indifferent Lake, or Pond, might yet learn to have some Conception of the Ocean, by being told, that it was a vast Mass of Waters, larger by many hundred thousand Millions, and even Millions of Millions, than the Ponds, or Lakes, that he had seen. In the like manner may we understand the Nature of God, as he is an Almighty Spirit, by multiplying, or enlarging, the Notion we have of our own Minds. The principal Property of them is, that they are spiritual, thinking Beings. The Difference is this, that God thinks in the most perfect manner;

ner; and this is the Foundation of all that we can conceive of God: For, by thinking perfectly, he is perfectly wise and knowing, and he that is perfectly wise and knowing, must be perfectly powerful: for what is perfect Power, but knowing how to do or make all things? And he that is perfectly wise, and perfectly powerful, must be perfectly just and good: for what is perfect Justice and Goodness, but using of an absolute Power with perfect Wisdom? So that while we have the Privilege of thinking, so long we cannot be destitute of the means whereby we may, by the use of our Thoughts, gradually arrive at the knowledge of him, who is the perfect Spirit, the Father of Spirits. And this brings me to,

3. To infer, from the knowledge that we have of a Spirit, and the infallible assurance that there is such a thing as a Thought, that we have not only a Notion of God, but even a Certainty, that there must be such a God as is the Father of Spirits. We have the greatest assurance possible, that there is such a thing as a rational, knowing, understanding Being. Every Man perceives himself to be one. Let every one then ask himself, how came by this Privilege of thinking? No one can be supposed to have given it to himself, and our Fathers must have known

the same as well as we: They could not but know that there was a time when they began to think; and this is as true of the first of our Race, as we know, and are sure it is true, in relation to ourselves. We cannot therefore stop till we come to the first Author of Thinking! And if there had not from all Eternity been a wise and understanding Being, it will be impossible for any Man to conceive how he himself should be made to think. And thus we are not only sure there is a God, but that he must have that Power of Thinking in Perfection, which he has communicated to us, in such degrees as pleased him. And this not only proves that there must be a first Cause, but a knowing and wise first Cause of us, as we are rational Beings. I am so sure of nothing as that I think, and that I had this Faculty bestowed upon me by some one else; that I did not give it my self; if he that gave it me was not the first Author, or Cause of it, then he must receive it immediately, or immediately, from him that was; and he that was the first Cause, and Author of it, must have received it from none else: And therefore I am as infallibly certain, that there is such a Father of Spirits, such an eternal thinking Being, as I am of any one thing, except that I myself think.

And certainly it is a great Evidence of God's Goodness and Wisdom, that we are so formed, as that we cannot in any considerable Measure know our selves, or the better part of our selves, but that we may, if it be not our own fault, by this means come at the Knowledge of the first supreme Being. We certainly have a good and clear Idea of a Thought, and therefore of a Thinking Being, as we have of Breadth and Width, or of any of the most gross Substances that are the Objects of our Sight and Touch: And we are sure there never could have been any such a Thing as our own Souls, which began to think a few Years ago, if there had not, from all Eternity, been such a perfect Thinking Being, such an Infinite Spirit, as is the Cause and Author of all the other Spirits that now are, or ever shall be.

4. From hence we may learn the Reasonableness of that fundamental Principle of Religion, that God sees and knows all Things. For the most essential Property of a Spirit is to think and know: And therefore the most perfect Spirit, from which all others are derived, must have an infinite and unbounded Knowledge. If we are assured, that our own Souls can feel and perceive what affects any part of our Bodies from Head to Foot, nay

and that by our Eyes and Ears, we have an apprehension of things that are at some distance from us; how much more credible is it, that a perfect Spirit, such as God is, can discern every thing that is done throughout the World? God is diffused, and (if I may so say) extended thro' the Universe, and is therefore more clearly conscious to all that passes in it, than we are to the Pains and Pleasures of the remotest parts of our Bodies. *Jonah* the Prophet is said to fly from the Presence of the Lord. By this is intimated to us, that he had such gross Notions of God, as to imagine he might find some remote Corner of the World, where the Eye of God could not reach him. He resolv'd to absent himself from the Holy Land, where, he conceiv'd, God did in a more singular manner reside, and hoped by this means to get out of the Sight of the Divine Majesty; by transporting himself from the Land of *Canaan*, he expected to avoid that dangerous and difficult Message on which God had sent him: But he soon found himself to be greatly mistaken, and that the All-discerning Providence of God was at *Ninive*, as well as at *Jerusalem*; and he learn'd by dear-bought Experience, that his Words, Thoughts, and Actions, were as clearly discern'd, and as strictly observ'd by God, at Sea,

Jonah i. 3.

as on the dry Land, and in the Whale's Belly, as well as while he was walking on the Surface of the Earth. The Psalmist confutes the Folly of them, who hoped that their Evil Deeds should escape the Notice of God, by saying, *He that made the eye, shall he not see? He that made the ear, shall he not hear?* And he might with altogether as much Force have ask'd, "He that gave to Men the Faculties of Thought and Knowledge, can He be defective in these Excellenceis?" And David does indeed argue after this manner, where he affirms, that God *fashions all the hearts of Men*, and from thence concludes, that *He understandeth all their works*: For by their *Hearts*, I conceive, is there meant their Souls, with all their Intellectual Powers. As it is a most certain Truth, that *God's Eye*, or his perceiving and knowing Power, *is in every place, discerning the evil, and the good*; So, by considering him as an Infinite Spirit, we do in some Measure know how he has this most excellent Property of discerning all Things; namely, in some such manner as our Souls apprehend, or are inform'd of what hits, or touches the Toe, or Finger, or see a Hill, or Tree at many Miles distance; though with this difference, that nothing can be distant from God: For he is actually present in every

Pf. xxxiii.
14.

every Particle of the Universe, in a much more perfect manner than the Light spreads it self through our Hemisphere every Day, or than our Souls irradiate our Bodies when they are most of all awake, and actuate us with the best Vigour that they can possibly exert; and by this means, without any difficulty, receives full notice and information of all that passes: He is a Spirit, who cannot be shut out from any Place by Brazen Gates, or Walls, and who has as clear and distinct a View of what is done in the darkest Cavern or Dungeon, as of what is transacted in the Light of the Sun. For he sees, not in the manner that we see outward Objects, by the help of bodily Light, but as we perceive what is done to our Bodies, by an inward immediate Sensation. Much more, if possible, is he present with, and in our Souls, and conscious to all its Motions and Operations; so that our most intimate Thoughts can no more be conceal'd from him than from our selves: And though we may forget them; yet he cannot. As God is the Father of Spirits, and as they do of all Creatures most resemble him in their Natures, so they are best qualify'd to receive the Divine Presence, and to be as it were mingled with it: So that, if God could know one Being better than another, it might be

safely asserted, that he had a more quick and lively Preception of the Thoughts of our Souls, than of the Motions of our Bodies, or of any bodily or material Substance. And thus, by considering the spiritual Nature of God, the Knowledge of his Omniscience, and of his discerning the Thoughts of Men, is made more easy to our Conceptions, and more certain to our Judgments. It was sufficiently declar'd in the Law of *Moses*, and other Writings of the old Testament, that God knew, and saw all things, and that he was present both in Heaven and Earth. But it could not be so well understood how this was possible, while Men generally apprehended that God was a Bodily Substance, of some unknown Shape and Figure, which seems to have been the Case of the best and wisest *Jews* who lived before *Christ*: But our Blessed Lord, by revealing to us the spiritual Nature of God, hath render'd his other Attributes, and especially those of his being every where, and knowing all things, more intelligible and familiar to us. And it is certain that the Belief of these Attributes, is absolutely necessary in order to establish the Fear of God in the Souls of Men. Men can never be brought to a tolerable Practice of their Duty, till they are throughly, and beyond all doubt persuaded

suaded, that God is greater than their Hearts, and knoweth all things. It was upon this Principle, that the antient Patriarchs became Examples of Piety, they walked before God, that is, they did in all Respects act and move like Men that were under a certain Persuasion, that God was present with them, and overlook'd all their Thoughts and Works, and heard every Word they spake, wherever they were, and howsoever they were employ'd. This was a hard Article of Faith with them, whose Notions of God were somewhat gross and corporeal: For which Reason 'tis to be fear'd, that some others as well as the Prophet *Jonah*, were not so fully convinc'd of God's being in all Places, and perfectly discerning every thing, as was necessary in order to make them truly virtuous and good. We are much more inexcusable than they, because we know God to be a Spirit who pervades or penetrates the whole Creation, to whom it is essential to think and know, who has no certain Shape, Figure, or Fashion, who is the Soul, and more than the Soul of the whole Universe, and perceives every Motion in it, in an infinitely clearer manner than our Minds do whatever is done to the Body.

5. From hence we may learn the Unreasonableness, the intolerable Absurdity, of Idolatry. Of this there are two sorts.

(1.) The worshiping of God under any Bodily Shape or Resemblance. It is certain there cannot be a more ridiculous and inconsistent Project, than to make an Image of God. If ever there was in nature a false Pretender to Art, he certainly was the Man, who first attempted to draw the Features, Complection, and Dimensions of a Spirit. What a Dunce was he, who undertook to paint Thought and Understanding; to carve or engrave Knowledge or Perception? What Pencil or Chisel can give us the Picture, or Sculpture, that can in any wise describe Freedom of Will, or Choice? If Motion itself cannot be painted, or represented upon Canvass, Wood, or Stone, how much less is it possible for the Art of Man to describe the first Mover? The only pardonable way we have of giving a visible Resemblance of God, is by writing his Name, or by giving some Emblem of him; and these are pardonable, because a Man of the lowest Capacity can scarce suppose, that either of these can be God himself.

It is easy to observe, that the Occasion of this sort of Idolatry was a gross Conceit of the Generality of Men, that what they

ever

ever was a real Substance must be capable of being seen or felt. Whereas it is certain, that whatever can be seen, or felt, must be comparatively small. What do we see but Animals, Trees, Plants, or Houses, which are as nothing in Comparison of the Earth it self, of which we can see, or feel but a very small Part? If we turn our Eyes upward, what can we see but Stars, the Moon, and Sun? and what are these in Comparison of the whole Universe? For it is reasonably believ'd, that those Parts of the Universe that are wholly removed from our Sight are much larger, and more numerous, than those which are in some measure within the reach of our Eyes. And can rational Man, that has the Gospel of *Christ Jesus* to supply the short and dim Sight of his own Mind, believe God to be such a poor petty Being, as any of those which I have now mention'd? so little as any of his own visible Creatures, that can be scann'd by our outward Senses?

We in vain look for any Similitude or Representation of God without us: There is nothing to be seen in Heaven, or Earth, in the Seas, in the vast Abyss, that is in any Respect like to God: If we would find any Likeness of him, we must look within us, we must contemplate our own Souls: They are indeed Spirits, so is he; but we can

can describe neither the one, nor the other, by drawing any Lines, by using any Colours, or by any Art or Device of Man. And let no Man think his Soul a little Thing, because it resides chiefly within so small a Compass as the Head: For he who judges in this manner, measures Spirits as he does Bodies, which is very injudicious. We should rather take an Estimate of the Largeness of our Soul by the vast number of Things that it contains, the many Notions of Persons, Beasts, Plants; of matters relating to ourselves and others, to our Families, to civil Life, to Letters, and Religion, which are laid up in the Soul, and ready to be made use of upon Occasion. Consider how extensive many of our Notions are, as those of the Earth, and which is more, of the visible Heavens, and of the Universe, and even of God himself. And can any Man judge the Soul to be a small or narrow Spirit, that can receive and retain, all at once, such an immense Treasure, such a wonderful variety of Objects? Can the Soul be called little, by which the Arithmetician can compute Numbers without end, whereby the Geographer can measure the whole Earth, from Pole to Pole, and the Distance between every known part of it; whereby the Astronomer does even measure the Heavens, and calculate

the Motions of the Stars? If we make our Judgment of the Largeness of the Soul of Man from such Considerations as these, we shall be forced to confess, that there is no visible Substance, but what is really less than these Spirits of ours; and that therefore, in this Respect, they come nearest to the Nature of God of any thing in this lower World, that we have any Knowledge of: And the better part of us, our Souls, can no more be painted, or any wise represented by human Art, than God himself. What Tool or Pencil can describe the Capacity, Understanding, Judgment, or Memory of Man? So that no Words can be more true or elegant, than those of the Apocryphal Writer; *No* Wisd. xv. 16.
Man can make a God like unto himself.

(2.) Another sort of Idolatry is, that of worshiping more Gods than one: And this proceeds from want of the true Knowledge of God, as he is a Perfect, Infinite, Independent Spirit, and the Author of all other Spirits: This is certainly the true Notion of God, and this excludes all Possibility of more than one. This Doctrine is not indeed so directly and expressly contained in my Text, and therefore I shall not enlarge upon it.

6. From hence we may learn the Usefulness of abstracting our Thoughts from all outward visible Things, and looking
not

not on the Things that are seen, but on the Things that are not seen; and particularly of contemplating our Souls, as they are Spirits, and therefore Images of God, and from whence alone we can take a just Idea of an Infinite Spirit in the manner before explain'd. Our Business chiefly lies with things that are gross and bodily: Our Senses are directly affected with nothing but what may be seen, heard, felt, or measur'd; our Minds are crowded with Ideas of things of this sort. But God and our own Souls are things of quite another Nature; and therefore they who indulge their Imaginations, and never undertake themselves to think of any thing but what hath bulk and distinct Parts, will find it very difficult to have any tolerable Notion of themselves, their true Selves, I mean their Souls; and they who are Strangers to themselves, their better Part will be wholly at a loss, when they endeavour to form in their Minds an Idea of an All-knowing and Almighty God. It may with reason be asserted, that Idolatry first took its rise from the Difficulty which Men found in conceiving an Idea of God: They had accustom'd themselves to think of no thing but what enter'd into their Minds by their Eyes, Ears, or other Senses, and therefore knew not how to frame any Notion of the Supreme Being, but by the Likeness

Likeness of some bodily Thing that was in the Heavens, or the Earth, or in the Waters under the Earth; and accordingly represented and worshiped God under the image of some of his Creatures; and so *shang'd the glory of the incorruptible God* Rom.i.23. *into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.*

It is certainly a great Infirmary of the Minds of Men, that they find it so hard to conceive the Notion of a Spirit, that a Being without Body, Parts, or Shape. Therefore God took pity upon the antient Heathen on this Account: For St. Paul, speaking of the Idolatry of the Gentile World, tells us, *the Times of Ignorance* Acts xvii. 30. *God winked at.* It is certain the old Jews themselves, and their Law-giver *Moses*, laboured in some Measure under the same prejudices, in this respect, with the rest of Mankind. They apprehended God to be a living Animal with Eyes, Ears, Hands, and Face, and back Parts: and God was pleased to indulge the Grossness of their Conceptions, and to condescend to the Lowness of their Capacity in this respect, as he did in many others: for he knew how very difficult it was for Men that had for so many years been used to think of nothing but bodily things, to abstract their Minds, and to receive, or form,

form, more proper and just Ideas of Spiritual Beings: therefore He left them to their former Conceptions, and thought it sufficient, strictly to forbid them the use of any Figure, or Likeness of the divine Nature. But now by *Christ Jesus* he hath more fully taught us to conceive him as a Spirit, that is, a Thinking Being.

There is Cause to fear that many *Christians* have not wholly overcome this common Prejudice. As some of the grossest *Papists* have formerly (if they do not still) described God the Father under the Figure of a venerable old Man; so perhaps some vulgar *Christians* of other Churches may be gross in their Imaginations, though they do not, like the other, paint, or carve any outward Resemblance of him: And nothing can be pleaded in abatement of this Folly, but the natural Inflexibility of our Minds to take a fitting Idea of a pure Spirit. It is the more pardonable in *Christians* of a lower Rank, to entertain such very indifferent Ideas of God, because we find that one of the Apostles, *Jesus* after some Years Personal Conversation with our Saviour, had not yet shaken off this Prejudice; I mean St. *Philip*: *E*

Joh. xiv. 8. he desir'd *Christ* to shew him the Father. Our Saviour does not absolutely condemn him, as he might have done, for asking

an absurd, or impossible thing; but the Sum
of his Answer was, *He that hath seen me,*
hath seen the Father. His Meaning could
not be that the Father and He were one Per-
son, that therefore in seeing one he had
seen both; nay, he declares, *the Father*
dwelleth in me, and therefore was certain-
ly a Person distinct from him. I con-
ceive, that our Saviour by saying, that *He*
who had seen him, had seen the Father,
intended thus much, that the Father could
not otherwise be seen than in his Works,
and especially by such Revelations as were
made by Men sent by him; and that the
Wisdom, Goodness, and Power of God,
could not be made more visible than they
were by the Miracles which our Saviour
brought, and the Sermons which he
taught; and that by seeing and hearing
them, *Philip* had seen and heard God, as
perfectly as was possible for man to do.
Further, I conceive, by these Words we
are allowed to conceive, and worship God
the Father, consider'd as dwelling in an
inherent manner in the Body of *Christ*
Jesus: and this perhaps might be intend-
ed as a Relief to the Weakness of those
Men, who complain of the Difficulty of
conceiving any Notion of a Spirit, whol-
ly abstracted and separated from Body.
For though we must not think, that the
divine Nature of the Father was so uni-
ted

ted to the Body of *Christ*, as our Souls are to our Bodies; yet we may conceive God the Father as residing in *Christ Jesus*, in such a manner, as he never did in any other Person, and we may worship him under this Character, and further than this, we must not go: But still remembering that he is an Infinite Spirit not confin'd or enclos'd in the Body of *Christ*, but pervading the Universe.



DISSERTATION II.

JOHN IV. 24.

GOD is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and Truth.

FROM these Words I shall take occasion

I. To shew what is meant by worshipping God in Spirit and Truth.

II. To set aside a wrong Meaning given by some to the Phrase of worshipping God in Spirit.

III. To shew how far spiritual Worship excludes outward Expressions of it, and the Use of bodily Things.

IV. That in order to worship God in Spirit, one very proper means is to worship him by stated Forms of Prayer.

V. The great Excellency, and Acceptableness, of spiritual Worship.

I. I am to shew what is meant by worshipping God in Spirit and Truth.

i. What is meant by worshipping God in Spirit: And I conceive it evidently

C c

signifies

signifies the worshipping him with our Minds, or Souls, which are Spirits, and bear some Resemblance to the Infinite Spirit, that is, God himself. Worshipping God consists in the following particulars:

(1.) In an acknowledging his Being and Attributes.

(2.) In begging from him a Supply of our Wants.

(3.) In praising him for the Benefits we have already receiv'd.

(4.) In using such outward Expressions of our acknowledging his Being and Attributes, and of our Earnestness in begging what we ask, and praising him for what we have receiv'd, as he by his revealed Will requires of us, or as our own Reason directs us.

(1.) And first it is impossible that we can be convinc'd of his Being and Attributes, much less, that we should acknowledge them, if we had not Souls, or were not endow'd with a Power of reasoning, arguing, considering, and applying our selves to God by Thought and Devotion.

(2.) We could beg nothing of God for the Supply of our Wants, if we had not Minds that felt those Wants, and that were fully sensible that it is not in our Power always to relieve our selves: If we were not by our Reasons and Judgments

inform'd

inform'd of a great Almighty Being, that was both willing and able to grant our Request, if agreeable to his Will, it cannot be conceiv'd that any Man could ever be a Worshiper of God. Nay, without a Mind, 'tis impossible that we could ever have any Requests, Desires, or Addresses, to offer to God :

(3.) Nor any Sense or Perception of God's Mercies, any Relish and Enjoyment of them, or any good and grateful Inclinations toward God, as the Cause and Author of them.

In the three Particulars already mention'd, the very Life and Power of Divine Worship does principally consist; and it is evident to a Demonstration, that they are all purely spiritual Actions, perform'd entirely by the Mind and Thought. He that does no more than what I have hitherto mention'd does truly worship God, and worships him in Spirit. And I can see no necessity of a Man's doing more than this when he worships God in private: I mean, it is sufficient to speak to God by the inward Desires of the Mind, or by a devout lifting up our Souls to him, without pronouncing with our Mouths the Words of our Prayers or Praises. I doubt not but a dumb Man may be a true spiritual Worshiper of God: He may have a real inward Belief of the Being, Wis-

dom, Power, Goodness, and Justice of God, and may silently confess them; he may with the sincere Desire of his Heart beg of God what is necessary both for his Soul and Body; and may gratefully reflect on the Blessings and Mercies he has receiv'd, and send up to God a Heart full of tacit Thanks and Praises for them. And God who considers our Meditations, and perceives our Thoughts, Wishes, and secret Ejaculations, as well as our Words and Actions, will certainly accept and answer such Praises and Prayers with as much Favour and Readiness, as if they had been offer'd in the most elegant Language, and with the most harmonious Pronunciation. Such Prayers as these are in the strictest Sense spiritual, without any the least Mixture of what is bodily. And they therefore who do acknowledge God's Being and Attributes, who are sensible of his Benefits, and do indeed praise God for them, who know their Wants, and humbly ask from God a Supply of them, must thus far forth be spiritual Worshipers.

(4.) But I observ'd to you that a fourth Particular, wherein Divine Worship consisted, was in using such outward Expressions of our acknowledging God's Being and Attributes, and of our Earnestness in begging what we ask, and praising him

of for what we have receiv'd, as he by his
he revealed Will requires of us.

These outward Expressions are,

1. Words. 2. Postures. 3. Sacrifices.

1. Words are outward Expressions of
our inward spiritual Prayers. For Words
are the Actions of our Bodies, at least
when they are audibly pronounced,
they are a Modulation of our Breath, ef-
fected by our Tongues and Lips, and o-
ther Organs of Speech. It is true, we
may think over the Words in our own
Minds, without any outward Sound; and
it is observable, that Words are so closely
tied to the Ideas of Things in our Minds,
that we cannot think upon any particular
Object, or consider, argue, or debate, any mat-
ter silently with our selves, but that we
do together with the things conceive the
Words, whereby they are signify'd, unless
sometimes through a Defect of Memory.
If we pronounce the Words of our Prayers,
then it is evident that our Bodies, or some
parts of them are made Assistants to our
Devotion. And it is impossible for Men
to join in publick Prayer, or joint Wor-
ship, unless all, or some one, or more, do
express the Words.

2. Further, peculiar Postures have by
all Nations, and even by the Light of
common Sense and Reason, been appro-
priated to Divine Worship, and especially

such as do best express our Reverence and Humility.

3. The Generality of Mankind have ever worshiped God by Sacrifice, that is, by offering some material Thing, a Bullock, a Sheep, a Cake, or some Fruits of the Earth, together with their Prayers and Praises. For all the Cattle, and other Sacrifices, that ever were offer'd by rational and considering Men, were intended as Expressions of their most earnest Desire, that their Prayers might be accepted, or that their Praises might more effectually find an Access to the Divine Majesty. And when in one Place, the Temple at *Jerusalem*

Isa. lvi. 7.

2 Chr. vii.

12.

Jerusalem is called *the House of Prayer*, and at another Place, *the House of Sacrifice*, the meaning of both Texts is the same, namely, that the Temple was a Place where Men offer'd up the Devotions of their Hearts, and inforced them by Sacrifices: Yet the act of sacrificing employ'd the Body only: It consisted in bringing some Beast, Bird, Cake, or Flour, to the Priest in the Tabernacle or Temple, and presenting it to him in order to be offer'd in whole or in part upon the Altar.

It is certain, that all the Words, humble Postures, and material Sacrifices that ever were required, or recommended by God in Scripture, were all intended by God to be outward Indications of the inward

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ward Sincerity and Devotion of Men in his Worship, and if they had been so used, then there had been no occasion for our Saviour to speak of it as an extraordinary, and new thing, that *the time was now coming, that true Worshipers shou'd Worship the Father in Spirit, and in Truth.* But it is too natural for thoughtless Men to have more regard to the outward part of Worship, than the inward: and it should seem, the generality of the *Jews* and *Samaritans*, in our Saviour's Time, were so wholly taken up with the outward Ceremonies, and Observances of the *Levitical* Mode of Sacrificing, that they were very little concern'd about the main Point, I mean, the inward Affections of the Soul. There were such numbers of outward Rites, such variety of punctilious Circumstances, injoin'd by *Moses's* Law in relation to Sacrifice, and these enforced with such severe Penalties, that the chief Care of them who came to the publick Place of Worship, was to see that they did not transgress the Law, as to the outward Decorums of Worshipping God by Sacrifice. And beside the many Injunctions given by *Moses* to this purpose, the *Jews* had made great Additions of their own, by the Traditional Notions and Practices received from their Fathers, and they were daily increasing the Number of them, by the Invention of

their own superstitions Fancies. By this means it came to pass, that what is the very Life and Soul of divine Worship, *viz.* an inward, affecting Sense of God's Being and Attributes, and of our Dependance on him; of his being the Author of all the good Things that we have received, or can desire; was lost, and swallowed up in that Multitude of outward, ritual Performances, which either the Law, or the establish'd, or growing Customs required of them. And the Truth is, the Law of *Moses* was very sparing in such Precepts, as enjoined the People the inward Devotions of the Thoughts and Heart; there was little said to excite them to use their Understandings, Affections, or Attention of Mind in the service of God; but every Page of their Law, and their Rabbinical Books, were full of Precepts and Directions, concerning the Modes and Ceremonies to be used in divine Worship. It is not therefore to be wondred, that a Worship, so incumbr'd with outward Formalities, should take off their Thoughts from what is of the greatest Concern and Consequence, I mean, the internal Dispositions of the Mind; by which means it came to pass, that the *Jewish* Worship, in our Saviour's time, was an Employment of the Limbs and Body, rather than a spiritual Exercise.

One main End of our Saviour's coming into the World, was to reform the Manners of Men; and the principal Point, in which the *Jews* wanted a Reformation, in Things pertaining immediately to God, was that of which I am now speaking, that their Judgments should be rectified as to the nature of divine Worship; that they shou'd be inform'd that it chiefly consisted in an Application of the Mind, or Spirit, to the Divine Majesty; that this was the main Point to which they were to have regard, in making their Addresses to God. And because the Levitical Law of Sacrifices had been one great Occasion of their neglecting the Spiritual Worship, especially if we consider it as loaded with the endless Traditions of the Rabbies; therefore our Saviour declares his Intention of setting aside the Levitical Law of Sacrifices, and foretells that the Time was coming, when neither *Jerusalem*, nor *Sychem*, should be the only proper Place of Worship; and did upon all Occasions explode and condemn the superstitious Traditions, whereby they had turn'd their Religion into a mere external System of mechanical Motions, or scrupulous Cessations. And instead of the Levitical Worship, and the burdensome Traditions of the Elders, he instituted a more plain and rational Method of Worship, in which the Mind was principally to be engaged;

gaged; he revealed the Spiritual nature of God, and took the most proper course to make the Worship of him a more clearly reasonable Service, than that which *Moses* had taught the *Jews*. And that there might be more room for the Exercise of our Thoughts and Affections in the service of God, he obtained, and declared a perfect Liberty as to all the carnal Ordinances of the old Law, and sent his Apostles into the World to teach, and call upon Men to serve God *in the newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the Letter*. And so divine Worship is now restored by *Christ* to its own original Nature; it consists in an Acknowledgement of God's Being and Attributes, in begging of him what we want, and praising him for what we have received; and in using such outward Expressions of our acknowledging his Being and Attributes, and of our Earnestness in begging what we ask, and praising him for what we have received, as he by his revealed Will requires of us, or as our own Reason directs us. But because the outward Expressions were so many and various at the time of his coming, so that all divine Worship was running out into external Formalities, therefore he has made these outward Expressions fewer, and less laborious, than they were before. And thus are we to worship God in Spirit, that

is, we must take care, and make it our special endeavour, to use our Mind and Thought in the Worship of God.

2. I am to shew what is meant by Worshipping God in *Truth*. Now I conceive that by *Truth*, in this place, we are not to understand that Christian Grace and Virtue which is contrary to Falshood and Hypocrisy, not principally at least; for that is simply'd in the Worshipping of God in Spirit: for whatever we do with our Minds, or Hearts, we cannot do without Sincerity. But by *Truth*, in this place, I apprehend our Saviour chiefly intended his own Doctrine, and Worship, as distinguish'd from that of the old Law; so it frequently, if not always, signifies in this Gospel, as where it is said, the Law was given *by Moses*, but *Truth came by Jesus Christ*. What was contained in the Law of *Moses* was free from Falshood, as well as what was taught by our Saviour: only the former was but as it were a Picture, but the other the Truth, the Life, or Original: so *Jesus Christ* calls himself the Truth, not as if he intended to impeach *Moses* and the Prophets of Prevarication; but because all the Types of the Law, and the Predictions of the Prophets, were accomplish'd in him. So he *sanctified the Apostles in the Truth*, that is, to be his principal Ministers in all Offices of Religion instituted by him; therefore

Worship,

Joh. i. 17.

Joh. xviii.
20.

Worshipping God in Truth imports the doing of it according to that Light, which *Christ Jesus* hath given us ; and this implies two particulars :

(1.) That we do not worship God by dark Types, and unknown Figures.

(2.) That we do it in that rational, intelligible way which *Christ* hath directed us, and which was prefigured in the Levitical Law.

(1.) That we do not worship God by dark Types, and unknown Figures.

It is certain, that a very great part of the Ceremonial Law of *Moses* was of such a Nature, that the main Body of the People never knew any reason why they were to comply with it, but only the Arbitrary Will of God, who had laid these Injunctions upon them. It was intended indeed as a Schoolmaster, or Myſtagogue, to bring them unto *Christ* ; the Sacrifices that were appointed to be offer'd, and the Priests who offer'd them, were Types of the Sacrifice and Priesthood of *Christ*. But it is plain, that the Veil was so thick that the Generality of the *Jews* did not see thro' it, or discern the full Meaning of them. And what *Maimonides*, and others have said of the red Heifer, might with as much reason be applied to the generality of the *Jewish* Ceremonies ; namely, that they were so dark and obscure, that *Solomon* himself could

not

not discern the reason of them. They saw the Shadow, but the Substance was hid from their Eyes; they might plainly enough look upon the Emblems, and Figures, but did not view the Truth contained in them: Because the Veil was upon their Hearts, but is now taken away in *Christ*. It is not, I think, to be doubted, but that the Apostles, and other well instructed *Christians*, who sometimes resorted to the *Jewish* Worship so long as the Temple was standing, might be said to worship God in Spirit, even by joining in the *Jewish* Worship: for they could without difficulty observe, how all the *Jewish* Washings and Lustrations were Resemblances of that inward Purity which the Gospel enjoins; the Blood of every Sacrifice which they saw slain in the Temple, was by them discover'd to be a Type of that Lamb of God which was slain to take away the Sins of the World; and how all the greatest Solemnities, especially those perform'd by the High-Priest, were design'd by the secret Intention of God to represent the most notable Actions of our Saviour, which he enterpriz'd and accomplish'd for our sakes: They could see, how the whole Scheme of *Christian* Religion was decypher'd under the *Mosaical* Rites, and had the Satisfaction to be fully assured, that whatever was in a dark and obscure

obscure manner hinted to the *Jews* in their Worship, was now set in a full Light, and open View, by the Actions and Sufferings, and Doctrine of our Blessed Lord and Master. But they could not worship God in Truth, except they did in the Temple perform the Christian Worship. And we are not Children of the Night, but of the Day.

(2.) And this brings me to the Second Point, that we worship God in a rational intelligible Way, when we do it according to the Directions of *Christ Jesus*; which were prefigured by the Levitical Law. Now the *Christian* Worship consists either

1. In that natural Service to God, which Reason teaches to all Mankind.

2. Or in these Services, which are peculiarly instituted by *Christ*.

1. The natural Service we owe to God, and which Reason teaches, is that which I have before describ'd, and consists in acknowledging God's Being and Attributes, and asking of him what we want, and praising him for what we have receiv'd. And it is true, the *Jews* knew this Worship, and were oblig'd to practise it, and did so in some Measure; they knew, and were bound to practise, and did in some Measure practise it, not so much by Virtue of any Law given by *Moses*, as of their own natural Sense and Reason. But still the

main

main of their publick Worship, (and of this our Saviour was here speaking) was perform'd by Actions not by Words: And though Actions do, in many Cases, express our Thoughts more effectually than Words, yet they do it not so clearly and distinctly. As for instance the Priest's sprinkling the Blood on the Altar, or before the Mercy Seat, was an Action whereby the Sacrifice was declared to be dedicated to God, for the obtaining such Requests, or for the acknowledging such Mercies, as the Votary wanted, or had receiv'd: The Flesh of the Sacrifice was burnt upon one Altar, and the Incense upon another, to denote the Ardency of that Desire, that their Devotions might ascend up to Godward with the Smoke, that went up from both the Altars. But no Man will say that these Actions were as easy to be understood, as if the Requests and Praises of the Priests and People had been declared in plain and express Words: Therefore all the Worship of the *Christian* Church, is to be perform'd by the Words of the Mouth, whereas this was done among the *Jews* by Emblems and Hieroglyphicks. The Washings of the *Jews*, and their abstaining from leavened Bread in their great and most observable Feast, was no doubt intended to signify to them, that they ought to purify their Minds when

when they came to worship God, and to teach them to keep their Feast to God, *not with the old leaven, or with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity, and truth:* But certainly all will allow that our Saviour took a more effectual course to instruct Men in this Lesson, by obliging all his Disciples in their Addresses to God, to express their Desires in Words at length, and to declare their Wishes, that God's Will may be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven; and to profess, that they desire Forgiveness at the Hands of God, upon no other Terms, but that they do also forgive such as trespass against them: So that even that Worship which natural Reason teaches us, was perform'd in such a manner, as was rather typify'd and figur'd, than expressly directed by the Law of *Moses*, but is, under the Gospel, fully declar'd and practis'd.

2. As to the Worship peculiar to the *Christian Church*, it consists (principally at least) in the two Sacraments. And

(1.) Baptism serves instead of all the Washings and Lustrations of the Law of *Moses*, and was before-hand figur'd, and signify'd by them; and *Christians* having once washed their Bodies in pure Water may forever after draw near to God, and have access to him. We know the full

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Import and Meaning of this sacred Rite, viz. that it is a solemn Dedication of the Party baptiz'd to the Service of the Divine Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and that on their part, it is an acceptance of the Person baptiz'd into the Favour and Protection of these three Divine Persons. It is indeed rather a Preparation of a Man for the Worship of God, than the Worship it self, (as the *Jewish* Lustrations were) with regard to the baptiz'd Person; but as to the Priest, and Congregation where the Sacrament is celebrated, it is properly a part of Divine Worship, as it implies an Acknowledgment and Recognition of all the Mercies of God in *Christ Jesus*, and a requesting God to confer them all on him that receives this Sacrament. And *Christian* Priests and Congregations, by knowing the Nature of this Holy Institution, and particularly, that all the Purifications of the Levitical Law were but Figures and Shadows of it, do by Consequence, in the proper use of it, worship God in Truth.

(2.) The other peculiar and principal part of the *Christian* Worship is the Communion of the Body and Blood of *Christ*. Instead of all the bloody and unbloody sacrifices of the Levitical Law, *Christ* hath left us but one. His own Personal sacrifice of himself once offer'd was typi-

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fy'd by all the Sacrifices of Bullocks, Sheep, and other Animals, under the Law: This standing Sacrifice in the Communion was prefigur'd by the offerings of Meal, and Wine, presented and offer'd by the same Law, according to the Prophecy of *Malachi*, who speaking of the Times of the *Messias*, says, in the name of God *From* Mal. i. 11. *the rising up of the Sun unto the going down of the same, Incense shall be offer'd unto my Name, and a pure Meal-offering.* And as *Jesus Christ* offer'd himself by the eternal spirit; so this Commemorative Oblation is to be made in a spiritual manner, not with Blood, Fire, and Smoke, but by the Prayers of the Priests and People. And whereas the Sacrifices of the Levitical Law were various, and tho' they were intended to be Prefigurations of the Sacrifice of *Christ*, yet were not generally known to be so, by those that offer'd them; on the other side, the Sacrifice of the *Christian Church* is one only, and easily understood by all to be a Representation of the Personal Sacrifice of *Christ* Body and Blood. And thus do since *Christians* worship God in Truth; forasmuch as all the Rites and Ceremonies of the *Jewish Law*, were only faint Representations of the great Sacrifice of the Gospel, and the Spiritual Services and Sacrifices of the *Christian Church*. And

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rk, worship God in Spirit, is to worship him
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 d e the Meaning and Intention of all the Rites
 sent and Sacrifices there perform'd, but he could
 bris not worship God in Truth in the *Jewish*
 nce temple, because that was not the Worship
 for of the *Christian* Church instituted by
 ies *Christ*; nay, all that was there done was
 efer only a Shadow of the true Worship, of
 G which our Saviour was the Author. And
 Sac us our Saviour has restor'd the Worship
 and God to its true State, he has made it

agreeable to our most perfect Reason and Judgment, and instructed us to perform the greatest Business of our Lives, as becomes rational Creatures.

II. I proceed to set aside a wrong Meaning, which some have given to this Phrase of worshipping God in Spirit. It is too well known, that very many who call themselves *Protestants*, and express a great Zeal and Concern for Religion, and the Worship of God, and the Purity of it, though they are very much at variance in other Points, do yet unanimously agree in affirming, that by worshipping or praying to God in Spirit, is meant uttering Prayers and Praises without Premeditation. And though the most wise, and learned among them do confess, that it is lawful, and commendable in some Cases, to pray by Form; yet the generality of the most vulgar sort among the several Sects, to whom I am now speaking, will hardly allow that any Prayer can be acceptable to God, unless it be drawn without Study or Forecast. And in this they seem agreed, if in anything, that the more Liberty is left to private Conceptions, the more ready a Man is at wording his Petitions, the more spiritual is his Prayer, the more excellent his Worship. And though all use of Forms is not absolutely to be rejected, yet that a Fluency of Words and Expressions

ions is a peculiar Gift of the Spirit, and
renders the Devotions of Men, whether
private or publick, more prevalent with
God.

Now I shall set my self particularly, and
large to confute this Notion. And I
conceive, I cannot spend my Time to bet-
ter Purpose; because I am fully satisfy'd
his false Notion has done great Mischief
to Religion. For from hence it comes to
pass, not only that the Forms of Prayer
used by the Church are despis'd and loth'd
by very many; and that others who use
them are less pleas'd and satisfy'd with
them; but that great numbers of Men do
almost, or altogether lay aside the Worship
of God in the Family, and the Closet,
because they have not Words at Will,
and do not find themselves able with any
readyness to offer their Devotions to God
the Extempore way, and they are per-
suaded, that no other way of doing it can
obtain Acceptance with God; therefore they
conclude, they had as good not do it all,
as to say their Prayers by Rote, or read
them out of a Book. Nay further, from
hence it comes to pass, that some Men are
 guilty of the greatest Uncharitableness,
while they condemn them who chuse to
Pray by a Form, as Men destitute of the
Fruit of God, and as mere formal *Christi-
ans*; so that by means of this new Notion of
praying

praying by the Spirit, our publick Divisions are inflam'd, the Worship of God in the Church is perform'd by many with Coldness, and Indifference, the private Worship of God is in too many Families laid aside; and the best of *Christians*, not only of this, but former Ages, are condemn'd and vilify'd: And I cannot but well think it worth my Endeavours to rectify Mens Judgments in a particular, upon which so much depends: And to this Purpose I shall consider every Text of Scripture, in which these Phrases, *The Spirit of Prayer*, and *Praying by the Spirit*, are used; as likewise those Places of Scripture which seem most favourable to the Practice of praying without Premeditation, and to the Opinions that praying by Form, and praying by the Spirit, are inconsistent Things. And I shall particularly shew that none of these Texts do prove that these Phrases have any such Signification. And that none of these Texts do justify this Practice or Opinion. I shall take the Passages of Scripture in the same Order in which they stand there.

1. The First is that of the Prophet *Isaiah*, Ch. xli. ver. 10, where God is said to *will power on the Inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of Grace and Supplication*. But it is to be observ'd, that the *Greek*, and many other good Interpreters

do instead of the Spirit of Supplication, say the Spirit of Pity, or Commiseration, and it is certain, the Hebrew Word will allow of this Sense, and to me this seems best to fit the Place. It is, I think, agreed, that this Text is part of a Prophecy concerning the Conversion of the Jews to the Christian Religion, and nothing could be more pertinent for the Prophet to say upon this occasion, than this, viz. that God should, in order to accomplish the Conversion of this People, dispose their Hearts to Pity and Compassion, so as to look upon the *Messia*, whom they had with cruel Hearts formerly pierced (as the very next Words are) with Commiseration, or inward Regret.

But let it be granted, that our *English* Translation is here the best, yet certainly it will be impossible to prove, that a Spirit of Supplication does imply a Fluency of Words in Prayer, without Forecast or Remediation. Let all the rational World judge, whether the full Import of this Phrase, a Spirit of Supplication, may not be this, that the Converted Jews shall have Hearts fill'd with Grief, and Anguish for the Sins and Folly of their Forefathers crucifying the *Messia*, together with an earnest Desire of Pardon for their own former Infidelity attended with devout Detestation of God's Wrath, and a Sense of his

his Mercies in calling them at last into his Church ; and whether these Affections of Mind are not more necessary for them to have, and more worthy of God to bestow, than a Readiness of Expression in offering their Prayers to God. If indeed these inward Dispositions of Mind could not be so well declar'd in Forms of Words ready drawn, as in sudden unstudy'd Effusions, then it must be allowed, that this Phrase would necessarily imply the Gift (as it is called) of praying Extempore : But if there be no Affection of the Mind necessary to Devotion, but what is fully and amply express'd in the antient Forms of Divine Worship used by God's People in former Ages, then it is evident, that this Gift will be wholly necessary, and this Prophecy may be said to be fulfilled, when the *Jews* shall by extraordinary Influences of the Divine Grace be directed to join in the antient establish'd Devotions of the *Christian Church*.

Little did any of the most Learned, and Famous Protestant Divines think of any such Meaning in this Phrase. Mr. *Calvin*, whom the most considerable Body of Dissenters, in this Nation, look upon as their chief Leader, thus expresseth his Sense of this Text : " God promises to the *Jews* internal Grace, by which he will inwardly affect their Spirits, so that they who

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“ were before hardened in their Sins be-
“ come Suppliants to God, and prevail
“ with him, and perceive him propitious
“ to themselves”.

2. Another Text, by which they who
oppose Forms of Prayer, would justify their
Practice, (tho’ the Phrase of *Praying by* Rom. viii.
the Spirit is not there used, nor any Phrase 26.
of the same Import) is : *Likewise also the
Spirit helpeth our Infirmities, for we know
not what we shou’d pray for as we ought,
but the Spirit itself maketh Intercession for
us, with groanings which cannot be utter’d.*
But it is not easy to know, or guess, how
any Thing here said by the Apostle shou’d
support the Practice of Praying without a
set Form. We own that the Holy Spirit
helpeth our Infirmities, but we can for
our Lives see no Reason, why it may not
help us when we pray by Book, as well
as while we pray without Book. We
gratefully acknowledge that the Sense of
our Religious Wants, and the Desire of
having them supply’d, and all the Zeal
and Affection with which we offer these
Requests to God, proceeds from the Holy
Spirit. We are fully convinced that by
the dint of our own natural Reason we know
not what to pray for as we ought, and that
the Holy Spirit hath supply’d this Defect:
for the Holy Scriptures were written by
this Spirit, and there we are taught for
what

what, and in what manner we ought to pray. If any Man shall dare to say that the Holy Spirit teacheth none, for what, or how to pray, but those only who leave the Wording of their Prayers to the sudden Suggestions which they expect while they are offering their Prayers; this is what the Apostle says not, either here, or any where else. Certainly they who with much Study and Deliberation drew our Forms, were taught by the Holy Spirit how to compose them, altogether as effectually as they, who leave all to be done by the Holy Spirit at the time of their Praying. They knew the Holy Scriptures, and the Doctrine of the Scriptures, are the Dictates of the Spirit. And sure it can be no question with Men of common Sense, whether they who compose Prayers with Deliberation, or they who do it without Fore-cast, take the most proper course to have their Infirmities relieved, either by the secret Influences of the Holy Spirit, or by his Documents contained in Holy Scripture. But lest we should imagine, that the Assistance we receive from the Spirit in Prayer consists, in prompting Words and Expressions to us, the Apostle expressly tells us, how the Holy Spirit helps us, and that is with groanings, which cannot be uttered: therefore the Sum of what we can learn, as to the

point before us from this Text is, that the Spirit of God directs us what should be the Subject of our Devotions, and how we ought to pray; and I conceive, that no judicious *Christian* will allow, that the Spirit does this by any other means, than by the good Instructions given us in the Old, and New Testament; nor will they, who pray without Forms be able to shew us any other Rule, by which our Devotions are to be regulated: and as to the immediate Help, which we receive from the Holy Spirit in Prayer, that consists not in putting Words into our Mouths, but Zeal, and Fervour into our Hearts: The Spirit does not move our Tongue, or mend our Pronunciation; but infuses unutterable Wishings, and Breathings after the Spiritual Blessings we pray for, into our Minds.

3. Another Text, where we have this Phrase of *Praying by, or with the Spirit* is, *1 Cor xiv. 14. 15. If I pray in an unknown Tongue, my Spirit prayeth, but my Understanding is unfruitful: what is it then? I will pray with the Spirit, and will pray with the Understanding also; I will sing with the Spirit, and I will sing with the Understanding also.* The Apostle is clearly speaking of one that spoke in a Language, which the Congregation did not understand, and this he calls *Praying with the Spirit*; and here

here *Spirit* signifies not, as it doth in my Text, the Soul, or Mind, with which all *Jews* are to Worship God, but the miraculous Power of the Holy Ghost, by which some particular Persons were enabled to speak in Tongues which the Congregation did not understand; for the Apostle gives it for granted, that he who spake in this manner had the Use of that Tongue inspired by the Holy Ghost: and this seems plain by the next Verse, *viz.* *When thou blessest with the Spirit, how shall he that occupieth the Room of the unlearned say, Amen, at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?* This unknown Tongue is believed by the most Learned Divines to have been the *Hebrew*, it is in the original, *the Tongue*, by way of Eminence. And when those, who among us pretend to a Gift of Praying, are able to express themselves fluently in a Tongue which they were never taught, otherwise than by Inspiration, and particularly in *Hebrew*, then we will acknowledge, that they pray by the Spirit, according to the Sense of the Apostle in this Place. And yet even this way of Praying by the Spirit, does not in several particulars answer to that Gift of Prayer to which some among us pretend; for the Apostle gives not the least Intimation, that the Prayer pronounced in a strange Tongue

in the Church of *Corinth* was made Extempore: In the same Verse the Apostle speaks of singing by the Spirit, and it is very improbable that the Holy Ghost did ever enable Men to compose Psalms or Hymns, and set them to Tunes, without Premeditation: It seems plain, that the Prayer and Psalm are both of them attributed to the Spirit on no other account but this, that they were pronounced or sung in a Language which the Speaker had by Inspiration: and a Man may turn that into another Language, which was not originally of his own composing: This might be the Case of those who pray'd, and sung by the Spirit at *Corinth*, that is, they translated Prayers and Hymns, compos'd by the Apostles, or their Fellow-Labourers, in the *Greek* Tongue (which was vulgarly spoken at *Corinth*) into the *Hebrew*, or some other Language not understood by that People. If therefore, the Gift of Tongues did still remain among our Dissenters; yet it would not from thence follow, that they would by that Gift be enabled to translate; much less to compose a Prayer Extempore: They might be qualified by their natural Eloquence to pour out an unstudy'd Prayer, but that the Spirit did ever enable Men to do this, is what yet remains to be proved.

If they still will insist, that their Method of Addressing themselves to God, is that praying by the Spirit, which the Apostle here means, we may justly infer that then to sing by the Spirit must signify the composing of Psalms, and singing them Musically without Study, or Fore-cast: And the Truth is, the Primitive Church in *Tertullian's* Time, did allow a greater Liberty as to Singing, than to Prayer. I know no single Instance of Mens being permitted to use their own private Conceptions in Prayer; but in Singing, they were allowed to use Psalms of their own composing. So the foremention'd Writer assures us (who lived less than one hundred Years after the Apostles) that every one was invited to sing what he remember'd out of the Holy Scriptures, or what he had compos'd by his own natural Parts; but then this was only at their Love-Feasts, not in their solemn Worship: Nor does *Tertullian* attribute these Hymns to any Impulse of the Spirit, but supposes they proceeded *de proprio Ingenio*, from the Mans own Wit and Genius. And there is no reason to believe that these Hymns were Extempore Raptures, but Forms of their own composing. And when any Dissenter can give us a Specimen of his thus Singing by the Spirit, we will allow, that praying Extempore, is praying by the Spirit.

Spirit too. But what Comparison is there between that miraculous Gift of speaking in Tongues, which they had never learn'd but from the Holy Spirit, and that freedom of Speech, which is so much affected by some in their Prayers to God! What Comparison between readily speaking the *Hebrew*, which was even then a dead Language, and speaking in a Man's own Mother Tongue, the *English*, and, I fear, sometimes hardly *English*!

4. There is to my Observation, but one Text more in St. Paul's Writings, where this Phrase is used, and that is *Eph. vi. 18.* where the Apostle charges the People to whom he writes, *To pray always with all Prayer, and Supplication in the Spirit.* But you will observe, that the Apostle here speaks to all the *Christians* at *Ephesus*: And if there were such a Gift as praying Extempore, it is not to be thought, that it was given promiscuously to all. Every one had his proper Gift, none had all of them at once; nor can St. Paul, by praying in the Spirit, intend only that they should join in an Extempore Prayer with a Minister in the publick Congregation: For he speaks of *praying always*, and therefore of praying in private as well as publick; and we are not to imagine, that the Apostle would give the whole Body of *Ephesians* an Advice, which he knew many

ny of them were not capable of complying with. Nay, there is no reason to believe, that by the Spirit in this Place, is meant the Third Person of the Trinity, or any of his Gifts or Graces, but only the Mind, or Soul of Man.

And I hope it needs no Proof that a Man may exercise the Powers of his Soul when he prays by a Form, as well as when he prays without one.

5. St. Jude exhorts those to whom he writes, *to pray in the Holy Ghost, ver. 20.* And there is a fair Intimation what he means by this Expression: For in the foregoing Verse he speaks of them *who separate themselves, having not the Spirit*; he by this implies, that they who separate themselves from the One Body, the Church do thereby forfeit their Right to the Influences of the One Spirit: Therefore he charges them that had hitherto preserved Catholick Unity, *to build up themselves on their most Holy Faith*, that is, as they had laid a good Foundation for Unity in all other matters, by embracing the One Faith; so they should improve this Unity into a perfect Coalition in Discipline, Worship, and mutual Affection: For *Building* when taken in a metaphorical Sense, does perpetually in the New Testament imply Union in point of Religion; and the Men may justly expect the Assistance and

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Concurrence of God's Spirit in their Devotions, when they preserve the Bond of Peace in other matters. And this I take to be the true Meaning of the Apostle in this Place, viz. that they should pray as one Body of Men influenc'd by the same Spirit, or glorify God with one Mind and one Mouth.

But if any one think it better to understand him in such a manner as to suppose, that he adviseth *Christians* to pray so as the Holy Ghost had directed to do by the Mouths and Pens of the Apostles, I see no occasion to dispute the matter; but shall only further observe, that neither in this, nor any other of these Texts, nor any where either in the Old or New Testament, have we any of the least hint given us directly, or indirectly, that to pray by the Spirit, is to pray without a prescribed Form.

But still it may be surmis'd, that since St. Jude expressly requires us to pray by the Holy Ghost, our Saviour here in my Text may mean the same thing by worshipping God in Spirit. To this, I answer,

1. I never said, nor thought, that *Christians* can pray as they ought to do without the Spirit of God. But as the Apostle clearly speaks of the Spirit of God, so I think it clear, that our Saviour in my Text speaks of the Spirit or Soul of

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Man; not only because there is no Sign of our Saviour's meaning the third Person of the Trinity, not so much as the Article, the Epithet *Holy*, or any other Mark, whereby the Spirit of God is usually distinguish'd from the Spirit of Man; but because the worshiping of God with the Mind or Soul, was sufficient to our Saviour's Intention in this Place, which was evidently to express the Difference between the Worship then us'd by the *Jews* and *Samaritans*, at *Jerusalem* and *Mount Gerizim*, and that Worship which he himself design'd to establish.

2. If our Saviour had express'd himself in the same Words that St. *Jude* does, yet he could have meant no more, than that we should in the Worship of God permit our selves to be directed by the Holy Ghost; and that we certainly do, when we worship according to the Scripture, and with such Dispositions of Mind as proceed from the Influences of the Divine Spirit. For the Worship of God must be our own Act and Deed: The Holy Ghost only assists us.

3. That the Holy Ghost did ever assist Men by prompting them with Words in their Prayers, is what I conceive, can never be proved.

4. If the Holy Ghost did find Men with Words, yet there can be no reason to be

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lieve, that he does this for none who proceed with Thoughtfulness and Deliberation in composing their Prayers. One would rather think that the Holy Spirit should help such as these, who do this Business with Care and Prudence, and as becomes rational Men, than those who perform it with a presumptuous Haste. That *Act of Parliament*, which established the first English Common Prayer Book in the Reign of King *Edward* the Sixth, affirms, that that Book was *concluded and set forth by the Aid of the Holy Ghost with one uniform Agreement*. And I am persuaded that this might, with as much Truth, be asserted of that Book, as of any Prayer that has been composed since that Time. But it may be justly said even of that Book, that if the Compilers had spent more Time, and Thought, and more maturely consulted the Scripture and Antiquity, it is possible, that the Production might have been still more perfect. The Holy Ghost assists Men in drawing Prayers, as it does in every good Word and Work, in proportion to their Endeavours, Integrity, and Capacity. And I cannot but believe, that a number of Wise and Pious Men, assembled together to draw up publick Forms of Prayer, and proceeding in a discreet and cautious manner, have much more reason to expect the Aid of the Holy Spirit, than

any Man, how Wise and Pious soever; especially if he sets upon it hand over head, and resolves to do it some how or other, rather than to do it well. And if therefore it be necessary, in order to spiritual Worship, that the Prayers which are used, should be composed by Assistance of the Holy Ghost, they do take the best course to obtain this End, who use such Prayers as were drawn with the greatest Deliberation, and by the wisest and clearest Heads.

23 And by what has been said we may clearly discern what is the true Import of this Phrase, as for Instance, that in the Prophet *Zecharia* it signifies, Praying to God with such Zeal and Compunction, as becomes sincere Penitents; that it may signify to pray as the Spirit hath directed us in the Holy Scriptures, and particularly in the Writings of the Apostles; for we know not, without those Scriptures, what to pray for as we ought, as the Apostle truly affirms *Rom. viii. 26*. It once signifies to utter Prayers in a Language taught by Inspiration, without any help of Man *1 Cor. xiv. 15*. but the Apostle is so far from approving this manner of Praying that he does expressly dissuade, and forbid it; except there be an Interpreter. In another place, *viz. Jude 20*, it implies Praying in consort with the Church, and

in such a manner as tends most to Unity and Concord, or however according to the Instructions given us by Men inspired. That at one place in St. Paul's Writing, viz. Eph. vi. 18. we have no reason to understand any more by it, than a diligent Application of the Mind to God in our Devotion, which is also the full Meaning of it in the Words of our Saviour here in my Text.

Our Saviour indeed, when he sent forth his Apostles to preach the Gospel, charges them *not to take thought for, or premeditate what they should speak, when they were brought before Kings and Governours for his Names sake: for it is not ye that speak,* says he, *but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.* Mat. x. 19. 20. Mar. xiii. 11. From hence some would conclude, that the Apostles were to make their Addresses to God in the same manner, without considering what it was most proper for them to say. But it is evident the Words of our Saviour cannot in common Sense be understood of speaking to God, but to Man only: nor was there the same Reason for enabling them by a miraculous Gift to speak to God, as there was to qualify them to speak effectually to Men of Quality and Honour. For God is one, and always the same; but the Kings, and great Men before whom

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they were to appear, were many, and of various Sentiments and Tempers. And tho' the same manner of Address be always acceptable to God, and that manner perfectly well known to the Apostles: Yet the various, and contrary Tempers and Dispositions of the Ruling part of Mankind required perpetually new Directions, as to the Measures that were to be taken for the making Application to them in the most proper way; and such Directions could be given to the Apostles by the Holy Spirit occasionally only: for they were utterly Strangers to human Oratory and Politicks: therefore our Saviour promised them, that they should be thus prompted by the Holy Ghost, when they were brought before Potentates; but when these same Apostles asked our Saviour to teach them *how to pray*, instead of bidding them not premeditate, but speak as the Spirit gave them utterance, his Answer is, *When ye pray, say, Our Father which art,* &c. And I suppose, all will allow, that the Promise given them by our Saviour, that they should speak what was given them in the same hour, and that, *he would give them a Mouth, and Wisdom, which all their Adversaries should not be able to gainsay,* nor resist, was a Miraculous Power given to the Apostles, and first Planters of Religion. And that Men in this Age may with whole

as much Reason assume to themselves the power of casting out Devils, and raising the Dead, as of speaking the immediate Dictates of the Spirit. If our Dissenters are indeed persuaded, that their Prayers are infused into them in the same manner as those Speeches were, that St. *Paul* pronounced before King *Agrippa*, *Felix*, and others, then their Prayers ought to be received with the same Veneration that is due to those Speeches, and may claim a place in the Holy Scripture, as well as the other. If it be not they that speak, but the Holy Spirit, then it is certain that their Prayers are part of the Divine Oracles: and if they are not, then this Text of Scripture is alleged to no purpose, and proves nothing at all, because it proves each too much.

If indeed it did appear by any one single Instance, that the Apostles, or Primitive *Christians*, did use this Method of Praying without Form, or Premeditation, then those who do so zealously espouse this way of Praying might have something to support their Cause, and keep them in Countenance; but to the best of my Knowledge, or Observation, we have not one single Example of it either in Scripture, or in the Monuments of *Christian* Antiquity; I mean of Praying in this manner when a whole Congregation was to join in with

them ; for as to private Prayer, I am not now concerned to speak of it. It is true, that the blessed Virgin, *Zecbaria*, *Simeon*, and others did by the Spirit compose Hymns, but that they composed them without Study, or Premeditation, is what no Man ought to affirm, because no Man can prove it : however they were first drawn to express the personal Devotions of those particular Persons who indited them : they were afterwards, and probably very early used in the Church, as they are now in ours ; and they could be used by others only as set prescribed Forms, whatever they were to those who first composed them : we have mention of Psalms, and Hymns, and spiritual Songs, Eph. v. 19. Col. iii. 16. whether these were the Forms of *David*, and other Holy Men, or new Composures of those who sung them, does not appear ; much less is it certain, that they were composed at the same time that they were sung in publick. If the Apostle had said *spiritual Prayers* instead of *spiritual Songs*, this would have been thought by some a mighty Proof for unpremeditated Devotions. Yet none of our Dissenting Brethren (to my Knowledge) have ever assumed to themselves this Privilege of being spiritual Singers, that is, Extemporary Psalmists. But there is one Consideration, which is of it self sufficient

for ever to silence this Notion, viz. that to pray by the Spirit is to pray without Form, or Premeditation; and it is this, that whenever the Worship of an Assembly together is described in the New Testament, it is always described in such a Manner as is now used in the Church of *England* in rehearsing the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer; that is, a number of People are spoken of as joining together not only in Heart and Thought, but with audible Voice, and sometimes by way of Suffrage, or Response, as we commonly call it; This I say is the only way of publick Devotion mention'd in the New Testament, except in one Place only. It is a Text, which I have in part already mention'd upon another Occasion, I mean 1 Cor. xiv. 14 --- 17. where St. Paul first supposes himself speaking in a Congregation, and says, *If I pray in an unknown Tongue, my Spirit prayeth, but my Understanding is unfruitful. What is it then? I will pray with the Spirit, I will pray with the Understanding also, I will sing, &c.* He still supposes himself praying in a *Christian Assembly* as the Mouth of the People. But in the next Verse he speaks of another Person as doing this Office, *Else when thou shalt be blest with the Spirit, how shall he who occupieth the room of the unlearned say, Amen.*

Amen, at thy giving of Thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest? For thou verily givest Thanks well, but the other is not edified: The Apostle here is thought by the most judicious Divines to be speaking of himself, or some other Minister as consecrating the Bread, and Wine, in the Holy Communion. The Words *εὐλογεῖν* and *εὐχαρισεῖν*, which we turn *blesse*, and *give thanks*, do very much favour the Sense of the Words: for they are the same, which are used by the Evangelists in the History of our Saviour's instituting the Holy Sacrament. And when he describes the unlearned or common People, as answering, *Amen*; *Justin Martyr's* Account of the Consecrating the Bread and Wine, in his time, which was less than ninety Years after, seems very much to countenance this Meaning. For he takes a particular Notice of the People's giving a loud and cheerful *Amen* at the Conclusion of the Consecration-Prayer; and we are not to wonder that in this part of the Service the Minister pronounced the Prayer himself alone, after the Example of our Saviour, who blessed the Bread and Cup with his own single Voice, and commanded his Apostles and Ministers to do as he had done. As to that Prayer of our Saviour's, *John. xvii.* it was not intended for a joint,

or publick Prayer, *Christ* put it up singly by himself, on Occasion of the offering up himself a Sacrifice for the Sins of the World. And therefore it does not come within the Compass of my present Discourse: and whether it was premeditated, or not, it is, I conceive, impossible to determine. But all the other Accounts that we have in the New Testament, of any number of Persons joining together in Divine worship, do clearly inform us, that all concurred in offering the Prayers with their Voices, as well as Minds; they concurr'd, I say, either in whole, or at least in part; tho' the most solemn part of the *Christian* Service was ever pronounced by the Bishop, or Priest, singly.

And 1st. We have one such Instance of joint-Prayer, and but one in the Historical part of the New Testament given us in Words at length; and it is the one single Description of the Words and Manner of a publick Prayer, that we have deliver'd to us, as plain matter of Fact. It is *Acts* iv. 23-----29; where when the two Apostles *Peter* and *John* had wrought a Cure upon the Lame Man, and some thousands had been converted by this Miracle, and by St. *Peter's* Sermon upon this Occasion, and had thereupon been brought before the High-Priests, and other Men of Authority, and had by them been threat-

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en'd with severe Punishment, if they durst for the future preach in the Name of Jesus, we are told, that *being let go they came to their own Company*, and how they paid their Devotions to God on this Occasion, we are inform'd in the next Words, *They lifted up their Voices to God with one consent, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made Heaven and Earth, the Sea, and all that in them is; who by the Mouth of thy Servant David hast said, Why did the Heathen rage, and the People imagine vain Things? The Kings of the Earth stood up, and the Rulers were gather'd together against the Lord, and against his Christ; for of a truth against thy Holy Child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles, and the People of Israel were gathered together, for to do whatever thy Hand, and thy Counsel appointed before to be done. And now, Lord, behold their Threatnings, and grant unto thy Servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy Word, by stretching forth thine Hand to Heal; and that Signs, and Wonders may be done by the Name of thy Holy Child Jesus.* Few, I believe, will think, that all this Assembly together, who lifted up their Voices with one consent, did, without any Pre-meditation, by the immediate Directions of the Spirit, concur in pouring out the same Words,

Words. For I think the most judicious Divines are agreed, that the Holy Spirit did not dictate the Words to the Pen-men of the Old, or New Testament, but only suggested to them such Things, and Materials as were proper to be written, leaving the Words to the Choice of the Writer; and from hence it comes to pass, that when the same matter of Fact is recorded by two, or three of the Evangelists, tho' the Substance of the Narrative be the same, yet there is often a considerable Variation in the way of Expression: and it is not to be easily believed, that the Apostles, or their Fellow-labourers, were at any Time more particularly assisted by the Holy Spirit, than when they were penning the Gospels for the Use of all future Ages: It is therefore most rational to suppose, that this Prayer was drawn and form'd by the joint Conference of the Apostles, or at least of Peter and John, who were the Parties chiefly concerned, and might by them be communicated to the rest of the Assembly, who taking it in Writing, or learning it by heart, were thereby enabled to join with their Voices in pronouncing of it. But, let it be granted, that this was no preconceived Form, but that the whole Assembly were by the very extraordinary Assistance of the Holy Ghost taught Extempore to use the same Words: it is readily own'd,

own'd, that a Prayer thus conceived must be indeed a very miraculous Product of the Holy Spirit. Now when any Congregation of Dissenters, or any equal number of their Teachers, shall give good Proof, that they can unanimously, without Collusion, or conferring Notes, break out into a rational, and coherent Prayer of equal length with this of which I am now speaking; certainly no one will question, but that God is in them of a Truth, and that they are indeed acted by the Holy Spirit. But when one Man only pronounces the Prayer with his Voice, and the others are silent, there is nothing more in this, than what is natural to very many who have a voluble Tongue; nothing but what may in a reasonable time be learnt by Men of middling Capacities.

The other Passages of Scripture, in which the true Worship of God, and *Christ Jesus*, is described, are in the *Revelations* of *St. John*, and therefore are not to be taken as Historical Narratives of matter of Fact, but as Visionary Representations; yet as these Representations proceeded from an Impression of the Divine Spirit upon the Mind of the Apostles, we may safely conclude, that the Worship there described is a Spiritual Worship, and fit to be imitated by us. And what I desire may be principally observed is, that

all the Devotions are performed by numbers of Persons joining in together with Voice as well as Thought; so as no Congregation of Men can do but they who use certain known prescribed Forms. And first we have the Divine Worship performed *Revel. iv.* by four living Creatures unhappily stiled Beasts by our Translators) one like a *Lion*, a second like a *Calf*, a third like a *Man*, the fourth like a *Flying Eagle*, and they had all four *six Wings*, and were full of *Eyes*, ver. 7. 8. and by four and twenty Elders, who are spoken of ver. 4. as sitting round about the great Throne (on which God himself is here figuratively described) on Seats, or lesser Thrones, clothed with white Garments, and with Crowns of Gold on their Heads. You may observe that the four living Creatures are said with an united Voice to repeat perpetually the same sacred Form: for they rested not Day and Night saying, *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come*, and at the same time, that these living Creatures give Glory, and Honour, and Thanks, the four and twenty Elders fell down before him that sate on the Great Throne, and cast their Crowns before the Throne, saying, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive Glory, and Honour, and Power: For thou hast created all Things, and for thy pleasure they*
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are and were created : With unanimous
 Harmony pronounce the four living Crea-
 tures one Form, the twenty four Elders
 another.

In the fifth Chapter we have the four li-
 ving Creatures, and the four and twenty
 Elders joining in one blessed Comfort, and
 singing a new Song to Christ, the Lamb
 of God, and we have likewise the very
 Form which they Sung ver. 3. 10.

*Thou art worthy to take the Book, and
 open the Seals thereof. For thou wast slain,
 and hast redeemed us to God by thy Blood
 out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and
 People, and Nation.* From this it seems

evident, that these four living Creatures
 were certainly Men : for otherwise they

could not have in truth said to Christ
Thou hast redeemed us with thy Blood.

They are indeed decipher'd as Angels with
 wings, and full of Eyes behind, and be-
 fore : but they must be human Angels

like those of the seven Churches, which
 are mention'd in the three first Chapters of

the Revelations, and are, I conceive, ac-
 knowledged by all judicious Divines

have been the chief Ministers, or Bishops
 of the said Churches. They are describ'd

with Wings to express their Vigour and
 Expedition in doing the Will of God, and

especially in delivering the Divine Mes-
 sage, the Doctrine of Salvation ; and

with

with Eyes behind and before, to denote their Sagacity and Penetration, especially in Relation to the Divine Mysteries of the Gospel. But they seem to stand clearly distinguished from real, or natural Angels in this place : for when this Song of the living Creatures and the Elders was finish'd, St. John tells us, *I beheld, and heard the Voice of many Angels round about the Throne, and the living Creatures, and the Elders ; and the number of them was ten Thousand times ten Thousand, and Thousands of Thousands ;* and these two pay their Worship to Christ in the same manner with the other, they all join in pronouncing the same Words, saying with a loud Voice, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing ;* ver. 11, 12. and in the next Words the whole Creation echoes these devout Acknowledgements, and the four living Creatures say *Amen.*

Again, *I beheld,* says St. John viii. ch. 11. *and lo a great multitude, which no Man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands ;* and this vast Body of Men pay their Devotions, not in the new way, that is, by one Man's speaking for all the

rest, but they all combin'd their Hearts and Voices together, and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the lamb: And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders, and the four living creatures, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshiped God; saying Amen, blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever, and ever, Amen. Lastly, Ch. xix. 1--6. After these things, says St. John, I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Hallelujah, salvation, and glory, and power, unto the Lord our God: For true and righteous are his judgments; and again they said Hallelujah, and the four and twenty elders, and the four living creatures fell down, and worshiped God that sat on the throne, saying Amen, hallelujah.--- And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying hallelujah; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. It ought not to be omitted, that the most famous Protestant Divines, that have undertaken to explain the Revelations, do affirm that the great Multitude with Palms in their Hands in the 7th Chap. denotes the whole Body

Body of our Reformers, and that this is the same Multitude, which is afterwards described at the beginning of the nineteenth Chapter, triumphing at the Fall of the Antichristian State, or Tyranny : and therefore they can with very ill grace call themselves Protestants, who oppose or refuse to join in a way of Worship, that is in the *Revelations* described as proper for them. And indeed the Churches of *England*, and *Ireland*, the *Swedes*, the *Danes*, and all the Lutherans, and some of the *Helvetican* Protestants, if not all, do use this way of Worship, I mean, upon many Occasions, the People join with the Minister, pronouncing the Prayers with an audible Voice, which they cannot do, that assert true spiritual *Christian* Worship to consist in one Man's pronouncing an Extempore Prayer ; and permitting the People to pray with their Thoughts only, not by audibly pronouncing any Words.

When *St. John* tells us *Ch. iv. ver. 1.* and *xix. ver. 1.* that he saw these things in Heaven, they who do thereby understand, that *St. John* was in Spirit transported to the upper, and happy Regions of the Universe, and there saw this Divine Worship perform'd, must acknowledge it to be just and reasonable, that the Worship of the Angels, and Blessed Spirits in those Regions of Light, are the best Patterns,

that Men can follow ; nor can any reasonable Man doubt, but the main body of *Christians* throughout the World would have all unanimously gone into a Method of Devotion, which was thus recommended to them by the Example of the Inhabitants of Heaven ; and no Man will therefore wonder, that all the most ancient Liturgies, and Accounts of Christian Worship, do represent the People as performing their parts with Voice as well as Heart. But I am rather of opinion that he thereby means the Kingdom of Heaven here on Earth, the Church of Christ ; and that the Holy Spirit form'd these Representations in the mind of St. *John* upon the Plan of the *Christian* Worship already establish'd, and therefore more familiarly occurring to his Thoughts ; as most of the other Visions have the Schemes of the Prophet *Daniel* for their groundwork, tho' varied according to the present occasions. For we have just Reason to believe that the Church of *Christ* did from the beginning, or long before St. *John* wrote his *Revelations* (which was not till above ninety Years after our Saviour's Birth) universally fall into this Method of Publick Worship, and that they took it, as hath they did many other Practices, from the *Jews*. It is certain that the Apostles used it soon after our Saviour's Ascension, as is proved

proved from that notable place, *Acts iv.* And they taught the Churches that were planted by them to perform their common Devotions in the same manner. *St. Paul* for instance I speaks of the Woman's *Praying, or Propheſying* in the publick Congregation, *1 Co. xi. 5.* by her *Propheſying* is clearly meant Singing of Psalms, or Hymns, as in other places of Holy Scripture *Sam. x. 10. 1 Chro. xxv. 1-3*: by her *Praying*, not barely being present where another prayed, and joining with him in her Thoughts, but pronouncing the Prayer, or some part of it with her Mouth in conjunction with the rest of the Congregation, or the better, more devout, and instructed part of it.

As these Proofs from the *Acts of the Holy Apostles*, from the *Revelations*, and from *St. Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians*, do clearly shew, that the Way of praying in the apostolical Church was such as is inconsistent with that so much extolled Practice of Extempore Prayer; so some other particulars may be learnt from them.

1. We may from hence safely conclude, that notwithstanding the Plots of Dissenters, the Church of England has sufficient Authority for directing the People to lift up their Voices in Prayer with one consent. And our Comfort is, that they cannot give ill Names to our Common Prayer

on this account, but they must at the same time reproach the Apostles themselves, and even blaspheme that Scheme of Devotion which St. *John* had represented to his View by the Holy Spirit of God; and, if we may credit the most celebrated Writers on the Revelations, that very Scheme of Worship, which St. *John* intended, according to the notions of these Writers, to be the Platform of the Reformation from *Popish* Corruptions. I am sensible, that *Dissenters* are taught to brand this, as well as several other good, and antient Usages, with the hateful Name of *Popery*, tho' it be in truth most directly contrary to it. All that know any thing of the *Popish* Worship, and particularly that it is all in the *Latin* Tongue, must be sensible that the main Body of the People cannot possibly join with the Priests, either with Mind or Voice; or if some of them do, Parrot like, learn to pronounce the Words, yet they cannot understand them; and it is therefore the peculiar Privilege of those *Protestants*, who worship God by Forms, that they do with Voice as well as Mind participate in the publick Devotions, in Prayers, as well as Singing Psalms. And it is observable that Singing is but once mention'd in the Vision of St. *John* now mention'd, viz, Chap. V. ver. 9. the other Passages are to be understood

stood of plain Pronunciation. And thus the Apocalyptick Visions are certainly in this respect accomplish'd in the Worship of our Church, when *the loud Cries of the People are as the Voite of mighty Waters.*

2. From hence we may learn, that all Repetitions are not vain, or such as our Blessed Saviour condemns *Mat. vi. 7.* *Hallelujah* is four times repeated within the space of six Verses: nay, we are told that the four living Creatures ceased not Day and Night to cry, *Holy, Holy, Holy*, *Rev. iv. 8*; and the least that can be understood by that Expression is, that they did frequently ingeminate that Doxology. And it is absurd to suppose, that that Method of Worship, which is thus recommended to us by Divine Visions is not in itself the best, and the most acceptable to God. They would do well to consider this, who condemn the Church for requiring us to say the *Lord's Prayer* four or five Times, and *Glory be to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, perhaps six or seven Times, in some one Assembly for Divine Worship. Whatever it is that our Saviour forbids, under the name of *Buttologies*, it is certain he cannot mean the Serious and Devout Repetition of a sound Form of Prayer, or Praise. I rather believe, that he restrains us in the use of affected Witticisms; and

that is indeed the most obvious meaning of *Battology*. For *Battus* was a Poet celebrated for Jingles and Trifling.

3. From these Schemes of Worship, as represented by St. John, we have an unspeakable Authority for the use of *Antiphones*, or of Suffrage, and Response, or of dividing the Prayers, and Praises of the Congregation between the Priest and People, or as in our greater Churches, between one part of the Choir, and the other. For when the four living Creatures had said *Holy, Holy, Holy, &c.* Rev. iv. the Elders answer, *Worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive Glory, &c.* And Rev. xix. when the Multitude had pronounced their *Hallelujah*, the Elders echo back again *Amen, Hallelujah*. And there comes a Voice out of the Throne, saying the same Thing in another Language, *Praise our God*; and immediately after the same is repeated by the Voice of the great Multitude, that first began it, *Hallelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth*. And thus the Divine Service was performed in two, or three several parts; and I should believe that the Method of alternate Devotions, which was generally for a long Tract of Ages used in all Churches, of which we have any Memorials left us, do have taken up its Rise from these Revelations of St. John. If I did not see sufficient cause to judge that

it was in use long before. *Isaiah's* Vision of the *Seraphim* in the Temple, which *Isaiah* directed one to another (*Isa. vi. 3.*) would certainly have directed the *Jews* to the same Method, if it had not prevailed among them from the times of *Dauid*, and even of *Moses* and *Miriam*.

By this time you may see sufficient Reason to call upon them that are Adversaries to Forms, for their Proofs from Scripture of Praying in any other manner. They bear very hard upon us, if we cannot produce Authority for every the least Punctillion of our Worship from the sacred Text; but I am very much mistaken, if they have any one single Instance in the whole Bible for uttering Prayers and Praises without Premeditation; I am persuaded they will find it very difficult to shew, that even *Dauid*, and other Inspired Writers did not use Fore-cast, and Deliberation, in drawing their Devotions, tho' they were under the extraordinary Impulse of the Spirit; and yet if this could be proved, it would be vain in them to allege such Precedents as these, unless they could first shew us, that themselves are inspired. In the mean time, I leave it to the whole rational World to determine, whether the publick Worship of God by Extemporary Effusions, in the manner used by the Disciples, be not entirely an Innovation, whether

ther it be not perfectly an humane Invention without any Support from the Holy Scriptures; whether it be not an Invention of the worst sort, which prompts Men to offer to an all-wise God the sudden Flashes of a warm Imagination, the uncorrected crude Suggestions of an ill-governed Zeal. I am perswaded it will be very difficult for those who are best vers'd in Church-History to give a more sad Example of Rashness and Presumption, than that which those Men have been guilty of, who have not only laid aside, but absolutely condemned all the Liturgies, and Publick Forms, of the best as well as of the corrupt Ages of the Church, without distinction; only to make way for a perfectly new, unexampled way of Worship, so far from being authoriz'd by Scripture, or agreeable to Reason, that I cannot but think it a direct Contradiction to both. And I desire it may be observed, that all that I have this day said, by way of positive Proof, that Extempore Prayer is not spiritual Prayer, or that Method of Worship which was instituted by Christ, is more than what Dissenters could in Justice or Reason have demanded, when Men begin a Practice in Opposition to the whole Christian Church, 'tis their part to prove that this Practice is necessary, and that it is the Duty of others to comply

with them in their Innovations. And since all the *Christian* World did publickly worship God by Forms, till this new Fashion was attempted to be brought in, less than 200 Years ago; therefore it wholly concern'd those, who struck into this new Method, to assert the Necessity of it from Scripture, Reason, and Antiquity: and since they have never been able to give us any such Proof, this alone is a sufficient Reason why we should stick to the former Method of Praying by Forms, viz. that they can shew us no just cause, why we should alter as to this particular.

And this Consideration is of the greater Weight, because we are as sure as we can be of any Thing, that *Christ Jesus* taught his Disciples to pray by a Form: at least their Reasons, or Allegations, ought to be more clear, that we ought not to pray by a Form, than our Saviour's Command that we should do so; or they should give us some greater Authority than that of our Saviour to counterbalance so mighty a Proof. And the Truth is, if our Saviour had designed, that his Church should use no Forms of Prayer, it was necessary that he should have expressly forbid them: for it is, I think, agreed by Learned Men, that all the Verbal Devotions of the *Jews* were stated Forms; and if this had been esteem'd a Corruption by our

our Saviour, it was necessary, that he should have expressly declared against it, and warned his Disciples to avoid it. And since he was so far from condemning it, that he certainly taught his Disciples to pray by a Form, we may therefore beyond all doubt safely conclude that it was his Intention, that his Church and People should continue the Antient Practice, and not run into a new Fashion.

Believe me, I take no delight in thus arguing, or as some Men may call it, disputing in the Pulpit: I had much rather spend my time here, in building you up in that Holy Faith which was once delivered to the Saints, in enforcing the Motives to an Holy Life, and teaching you those things, which have a more direct Tendency to make you wise unto Salvation. But when Men labour under Mistakes and Prejudices, even as to the very Nature of Divine Worship, such Prejudices as render them ill affected to all Prayers, save such as are the very worst, I mean such as are made with the greatest Hate, with the least Thought and Judgment, I think it necessary to use my best Endeavors to set Men right as to this particular. And certainly one principal End of Preaching is to inform Mens Judgments, and especially in such points, as have an immediate Influence upon Practice, and wherein

wherein the Peace of the Church is so
nearly concerned. And if what I have
said, and shall farther say on this Subject,
be less pleasing to some, they are to thank
those who provoke us to this necessary
Defence of the Church, and of our selves,
by their perpetual Declamations against
Forms of Prayer. I did several Years past
Preach these Sermons to you, and now
I do of choice repeat them with some
Enlargements, and this I do, as for other
Reasons, so especially because I desire to
convince you, that what I formerly said
was not the Effect of any sudden Heat of
Temper, or Fancy, but the sedate Conclu-
sions of my Reason and Judgment, ground-
ed upon Scripture and Antiquity, settled by
a just Consideration of the Nature of Divine
Worship, and of all the Circumstances of it.
And I must here take occasion to profess,
that the more I have thought upon this
matter, the more am I still convinc'd, that
staying without a Form, is so far from being
worshipping God in Spirit, that it is indeed
an Obstruction to True Spiritual Worship.
II. I proceed to the third general Head
of Discourse, which is to shew how far
Spiritual Worship excludes outward Ex-
pressions of it, and the Use of Bodily
things in the Service of God. And here,
as I shall shew what those outward
Bodily Actions are, which do wholly de-
stroy

stroy, or very much injure the Spiritual Worship of God in Publick.

2. What they are, which are perfectly consistent with it.

1. What those outward bodily Actions are which do wholly destroy, or very much impair the Spiritual Worship of God.

I. I think it evident, that all unintelligible Actions, Words, and Ceremonies, are inconsistent with that Spiritual Worship, which God requires of us under the Gospel. For it carries an Aire of Absurdity with it, to say that a Man worships God in Spirit and Truth, when he does not indeed understand what is said or done. One principal Reason why the Worship in the Jewish Tabernacle and Temple was not Spiritual, was this, that the People could not steadfastly look, or have a clear inspection, into the end of that which is abolish'd, 2 Cor. iii. 13. they could not discern the Meaning, Design, or Intention of a very great part of the Worship prescribed by the Law of Moses; they neither did apprehend, that Christ, and his Spiritual Worship were typically described by that Ceremonial Law, nor did they conceive any other Reason of those various Levitical Institutions, which are now done away by the Blood of Christ, and therefore they worship'd God neither in Spirit, nor in Truth. And the

Worship

Worship be in it self never so easy to be understood, so wisely and rationally contriv'd, tho' it be express'd in proper Words, and form'd in the most agreeable, and elegant Stile and Method ; yet it cannot be spiritual, except it be in a Language understood by those who are to join in it ; and the Reason is plain, namely, that nothing is Spiritual, but what is duly apprehended by the Mind. When our Saviour speaks of worshiping in Spirit, his meaning is, that we should with our Soul, and Thoughts, pay our Addresses to God ; but this cannot be done when the Prayers, or Praises, are pronounc'd in a Language in which we are Strangers. Let it be granted that the *Romish* Mass be the most perfect in its kind of any in the World, that it is as free from all Errors, and Corruptions, as its greatest Admirers are willing to have it thought ; yet it is certain, that even upon this large, and unreasonable Concession, the generality of the *Papists* cannot be Spiritual Worshipers, because the Mass is in a Language which they know not, and therefore cannot join with the Priest in putting up the Prayers and praises contained in it ; and those of the *Monks*, who probably are not a few, and of the People who know how to pronounce the Words of the *Latin* Service, but are ignorant of the Sense and Mean-

Meaning, can only perform a Lip-labour; for nothing can render it a true Spiritual Service so long as the Mind cannot go along with the Voice, nor the Thoughts accompany the Words. If indeed an Interpreter were allow'd, if what is spoken in *Latin* were translated into the Mother-Tongue, so that the Church might be edified, this might plead excuse for *Latin* Prayers; but it is well known, that the Ruling part of the Church of *Rome* do by all means endeavour to prevent, and suppress all Translations of their Missal, and other Books of publick Worship, into the Vulgar Tongues, which are understood by the People. And it is very sad to consider, that not only the Church of *Rome*, but of *Greece*, and most, if not all the Oriental *Christians* do perform Divine Service in Languages, with which the main of the People (to say nothing of the Priests) are as little acquainted, as the generality of the *French*, *Spaniards*, *Italians*, and *Germans* are with the *Latin*; so that I know not whether any *Christians* in the World, except the *Protestants*, and the *Russians* do perform the publick Worship of God in the Tongue commonly known among them. And a most Melancholick Reflection it is, that much the greater part of those, who profess themselves the Disciples of *Christ Jesus* should so notoriously deviate

deviated from that Rule, that Funda-
mental Rule of Divine Worship, which
was given them by their Divine Masters,
as by their Established Customs and Prac-
tices, to render the publick Service of
God a meer Sound, and empty Noise, to
the main Body of those who are concern'd
to join in it, and thereby to put the Peo-
ple under an absolute Impossibility of
Worshipping God in Spirit. If any of the
People do learn to speak the unknown
Tongue, in which the Publick Devotions
are perform'd, and so can lift up their
Voices with due consent (which I am as-
sured is the Practice in some *Papists* Countries)
but so long as they are ignorant of the
Signification of the Words, when they
speak, or sing, they cannot be Spiritual
Worshippers, because their *Mind*, or Under-
standing is *unfruitful*, and he that speaks
is not only a Barbarian to others, but
to himself, because he says he knows
what he says, but does not understand it.
I conceive, that too great a Number
of Ceremonies, even tho' the Service be in
order, and respects sound, and commendable,
may impair, or diminish the Spirituality
of Divine Worship, tho' not wholly ex-
tinguish it. You will better know my Mean-
ing, when I tell you, that I look upon that
East Cumble of Crossings, Bowings, Gene-
rations, Kissings, Incensings, and the
like

like used by the Priests and Clergy in the Religious Offices in the Church of *Rome*, to be a very great Encumbrance to the Minds of them that practice that sort of Worship, and therefore to be a violent Obstruction to true Spiritual Devotion. When it is consider'd, that the Priest in consecrating the Eucharist only is to make about thirty Crosses; and every one of these at a certain critical Moment, or just as he is pronouncing some particular Words; what great Variety of Actions and Postures he is to use; how often he is to kiss the Altar, and the Appertinences of it; what a large Apparatus of Vestments for himself and the attending Clergy; of Furniture and Vessels for the Offices he is performing; one cannot but think, that a Mind engaged in so many Cares for so little External things, can have scarce any room left for that which is the very Life and Soul of the Worship of God, that is, the Application of the Thoughts and Desires to the Divine Majesty: And that therefore so great a Multitude of Ceremonies does very much clog and oppress the Mind, or Spirit, of the Worshiper, tho' not so perfectly stifle and smother it, as the Use of an unknown Tongue certainly does. For tho' it is true, that the Priests and Clergy are chiefly employ'd in the Ceremonious Part of their Worship; yet

the

the People who stand by must have their Eyes so diverted, and their Thoughts so fill'd with what they see, that they must needs be less affected with what they hear, if it were never so good in it self, and never so well understood by them. I am far from thinking all Rites, or even unnecessary Ceremonies, inconsistent with the Spiritual Nature of *Christian* Worship, so that they be grave, decent, and significant; but such an intolerable Load of Ceremonies, as the Church of *Rome* hath laid on the neck of her Disciples, must, I conceive, very much obstruct the Operations of the Mind in the Service of God, tho' the Service of their Church were, in other respects, never so true and unexceptionable, and render it such as very much needed Reformation.

Yet when we call the *Christian* Worship *Spiritual*, we are not from thence to conclude that the Body is wholly excluded from being exercised in it. For tho' we are Spirits, yet we are Spirits that dwell in Bodies, we are cloathed with Flesh, and Blood, and Bones, that have Limbs, and Joints to move, and act, according to our Directions; and our Devotions must be such as comports with our Natures: Our Souls must bear the principal Share in our Worship, as they do in our Composition; but our Bodies too are a part of our-

selves, and therefore must join in this Work : For he that does not employ his Body to this Purpose, does not exercise the whole Man in the Service of God : And God made our Bodies as well as Souls, and *Christ* hath redeemed the one as well as the other, and therefore we are bound to serve, and glorify him both *with our Bodies, and Spirits, which are his*; 1 Cor. vi. 20. And that it may appear, that Bodily Actions and Things do not at all destroy the Nature of Spiritual Worship, nay, that some of them are perfectly necessary to the Performance of it in publick, or in conjunction with others, let it be consider'd ;

1. That Words are Bodily things or Actions, whether we consider them as read out of a Book where they are written, or barely pronounc'd by the Tongue, and other Instruments of Speech. As our Religion is Spiritual, tho' contained in a Book written or printed by the Hands of Men, and read by the help of our Eyes and Mouths ; so is our Worship Spiritual also, tho' the Prayers and Praises are read out of a Book, and pronounc'd with human Voice : And tho' the Words are Bodily things in both Cases ; yet the Sense, and Meaning, the Use and Application of them is perfectly Spiritual : Because it is by our Minds and Thoughts only

only that we know the Signification of them, and offer them up in our Devotions as the Speech of our Souls. They who would have Religion to lie in the Mind only, and not in Books, must at least resolve it all into the Memories of Men and Oral Tradition, so much magnified by the Church of *Rome* ; or else into the Whimsies of *Enthusiasts* : And surely our Devotions do no more cease to be Spiritual on Account of their being read out of a Book, than the Gospel ceases to be Spiritual for the same Reason. In fine, Words are Bodily things, whether spoken with, or without Premeditation ; whether they are set in Form, or put together by Chance ; whether compos'd with Judgment and Discretion, or jumbled together by a fortuitous Concourse. A Prayer may be Spiritual as well as a Song, though it be indited with the greatest Care, and Deliberation, and tho' one be sung, and the other said out of a Book.

2. Standing, Bowing, Kneeling, and Prostration, are Actions of the Body, and not the Use of them in the Worship of God does not render our Prayers or Actions less Spiritual. Both Words, and Actions, are equally the Actions of the Body ; and neither the one, nor the other is inconsistent with Spiritual Worship. Regardful Bodily Behaviour does as effectually

ly exprefs the Humility of the Mind, as Words can do it: But neither the one, nor the other does certainly, or infallibly, declare the Thoughts of our Hearts. It is poffible for Men to bend their Knees without bending their Minds; and fo Men may draw near to God with their Lips, while their Hearts are far from Him. But on the other fide, he who is inwardly felf-abafed, and has fuch great Thoughts of God, and fuch little Thoughts of himfelf, as it becomes him to have, will by thefe inward Difpofitions of his Heart be ftrongly carried to exprefs them by a humble outward Deportment. Certainly our Saviour Worfhip'd God in Spirit when *he kneeled down, and prayed* in his laft Agony, *Luke xxii. 41.* And they who affect to offer up their Devotion fitting, or in any fuch like too Familiar Pofture, feem to forget the Distance that is between God and themfelves.

3. Nor are other outward Ritual Obfervances at all contrary to Spiritual Worfhip. St. Paul tells us, that *a Man praying, or prophefying with his Head uncover'd, difhonoureth his Head; but that a Woman praying, or prophefying with her Head uncover'd, difhonoureth her Head,* Cor. xi. 4, 5. From hence we may affuredly conclude, that St. Paul thought this Ceremony of the Man's Worfhiping with

Head uncover'd, and the Woman cover'd, was fairly consistent with true Spiritual *Christian* Worship: And therefore it is evident, that Men may not only use their Voices, and Limbs, in rendering to God the Service due to him; but may at the same time use other outward Decorums. Nay, *St. Paul* directs those People to whom he writes, to *Salute each other with an Holy Kiss*: And the Practice of the True Primitive Church is the best Explanation of this Hint of the Apostle: And this Practice was to use the Kiss of Charity in the most Solemn part of the most Solemn Office, of the *Christian* Religion, I mean just before the Receiving of the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of *Christ*: So that we have Demonstration for the Lawfulness of using external Bodily Ceremonies in the Worship of God: And certainly the Apostles, next to *Christ Jesus* himself, were the most proper Judges of such Rites and Circumstances as are consistent with the nature of true Spiritual Worship. Only here let us take two Rules along with us, *viz.* 1st. To take heed, that such Ceremonies be Solemn, and Significant, and fitted to impress some weighty Doctrines on our Minds; such was the Apostolical Ceremony, of Mens Praying with their Heads bare, and Women with theirs veil'd, to shew the

Superiority of the Husband, and the Subjection of the Wife; such was that other Ceremony of the Holy Kiss, as being intended to signify that mutual Charity, which ought to prevail among *Christians*; and such is that Ceremony of the Church of *England*, and probably of all the antient Churches, I mean Crossing the Forehead of the Person baptised, to shew that he must not be ashamed of *Christ* crucified. 2dly, Another Caution is, that we all endeavour in our several Stations to prevent that Growth and Multiplication of New Ceremonies, which hath been one Occasion of that Obscurity which hath spread itself over the whole System of the *Romish* Worship; by which they have made the Devotions of their Church more hard to be understood, than those of Old perform'd in the *Jewish* Temple. And this Caution concerns the Laity as well as Clergy: For it seems clear, that most of the Ceremonies, which were afterwards, injoin'd the People, were first by the Voluntary Consent of a great Part of them brought into Use and Practice. And it is certain that some of the grossest Superstitions of *Popery*, and especially the Worship of Images, Monckery, Pilgrimages, and several other Topperies could never have so Universally prevailed in *Christendom*, as they did before the Reformation,

formation, if Lay-men, and even the Civil Powers, had not lent their Assistance; Nay, they could never have gain'd so general a Reputation, if the Laity had not promoted them with as forward a Zeal, as the Prelates and Clergy themselves. And I conceive, it concerns all that have the Honour of *Christianity* at Heart, to oppose all Innovations of this Sort, and to enquire for, and walk in the old Primitive Paths. For a Multitude of Ceremonies is but a Cloud and Burden to the Minds of Worshipers; tho' a few, if they be grave and significant, do not at all obstruct Spiritual Devotion.

4. And that the Use of Bodily Things, and Actions is perfectly consistent with that Spiritual Worship, which our Saviour instituted, is evident from the two Sacraments of which he is the Author.

(1.) *Water-Baptism* is a Spiritual Action, because, when duly administer'd, it is attended with the inward Washing of the Holy Ghost. It is no dumb, insignificant Ceremony, it is a covenanting Rite used and enjoined by *Christ Jesus* himself, who was the best Judge of such Things and Actions, as were consistent with the Spiritual Nature of that Worship which he taught and prescribed. All *Christians* who are but tolerably instructed in the knowledge of that Religion which they profess,

profess, discern the true Meaning of this external Action, they know it to be a Regenerating Washing, not only an outward Sign of that inward Purity, which ought to be the distinguishing Badge of all *Christians*; but a divine Seal, by which all the Promises of the Gospel, and especially the renewing Power of the Holy Spirit, are ensured to all that duly receive it. This Sacrament to them who know not, or believe not the Gospel, seems to be only a putting away the Filth of the Flesh; but to them who see it with the Eye of Faith, it is a Confirmation of the *Christian* Covenant, and the Water it self is not only an Emblem, but an Assurance of divine Grace; and therefore Baptism is not only a Bodily, but it is eminently a spiritual Action: The outward Washing is the saving Figure; the invisible, and most valuable part of it, is the Holy Spirit's sealing the Soul of the Baptized, which is not perceivable but by the Spirits, or Souls, of those that are illuminated by Divine Truth.

(2.) The other Sacrament is also a Spiritual Action. Tho' the gross Substance of it be Bread and Wine; and tho' the Consecration of it is performed by the Ministry of Men, and by Words, and Prayers pronounced with human Voice; and tho' the Bread is broken, and the Wine poured

poured out, and both of them distributed, and received in a Bodily manner; yet still the Bread and Wine are the spiritual Body and Blood of *Christ*. They are not so to the outward Senses, or as to their visible Substance, but only to our spiritual Perception; they become the Body of *Christ*, not by any change of their outward Nature, but by a secret, invisible Operation of the divine Spirit. They are the Body and Blood of *Christ*, because God accepts them as such, and renders them as Beneficial in all Respects to us, as if the very natural Body and Blood of *Christ* were communicated to us. To a *Jew*, or *Heathen*, to any one destitute of true Faith, they are but mere Bread and Wine; but by well instructed *Christians* the Body and Blood of *Christ* are discerned in this Holy Sacrament, and they who discern them not, are unworthy Receivers, they are guilty of a Contempt against the Body and Blood of *Christ*. They that terminate their Devotions upon the Bread and Wine as mere Types, Figures, and Resemblances, can scarce be call'd Spiritual Worshipers, according to the full Intention of our Blessed Saviour; they conceive the Bread and Wine to be only Shadows of *Christ* Crucified; and therefore can apprehend no more in the *Christian* Eucharist, than in the *Jewish* Passover. But the true *Christian*

stian Communicant sees, and receives, not only Bread and Wine with his Mouth; but the Body and Blood of *Christ* by his Faith; for the Bread and Wine are the Body and Blood to him, tho' not in substance, yet in Spirit, Life, and Power. Thus the Holy Eucharist is truly a spiritual Worship, not only as the divine Spirit renders the Bread and Wine what they are, *viz.* the Life-giving Body and Blood of *Christ*, but as they are spiritually discerned to be what they are; and because the Minds, or Spirits of Men are, or ought to be, employ'd in this Holy Sacrament much more than their Bodies; and as this sacred Feast was intended for the Repast and Entertainment of the inward much more than of the outward Man.

Thus I have shew'd that Bodily Things, and Actions are not inconsistent with Spiritual Worship, so that these Bodily Things, and Actions have a Spiritual Meaning, and that the Worshipers be sufficiently inform'd in the Nature of them, and do, to their Power and Knowledge, exercise their Minds and Thoughts in the Use of these External Observances, and do not dwell on the Surface, or Outside of them. And no Publick Worship can be so contrived, or perform'd, but that it may cease to be spiritual to such as Regard only the Husk, or Shell, who regard only the outward Actions

ons or Words, but do not attend to the real Meaning, or Design of them, or do not endeavour to pursue, or attain those Ends. In a Word, none can be a spiritual Worshiper, but he that seriously employs his Mind in the Worship of God ; and none can worship God in Truth, but they who Worship him according to the Directions of the Gospel.

IV. I proceed to the fourth general Head of Discourse, *viz.* That in order to render our Devotions truly Spiritual, one Way is to worship God by stated Forms of Prayer. Now it is evident, that to worship God in Spirit is to do it with a just Application of our Thoughts and Minds. Let us therefore consider those Powers, and Faculties of the Mind, which are chiefly to be exercised in Relation to the Worship of God ; and enquire, whether they who pray with a Form, or they who pray without one, take the best course to employ these Faculties in their Devotions, after the most proper manner.

Now these Faculties of the Mind are.

1. Attention. 2. Understanding. 3. Judgment.
4. Affection. 5. Humility. 6. Memory.

1. As to Attention ; it is a common Complaint of good *Christians*, that they find it very difficult. Where almost is that Man, who makes Devotion his daily Practice, and cannot experimentally say, that it is very hard to attend on God

in

in Prayer without Distraction, or Wandering of Thought: and all will agree, that that Method of Praying which does least of all expose us to the danger of having our Minds interrupted, is on this Account to be chosen before any other. The devout *Christian*, when engaged in the Duty of Prayer makes it his chief Care to keep his Attention fix'd upon God, and the Mercies and Graces which he asks of him, or for which he is now offering his Thanks and Praises: and let all the rational World judge, whether it be easier to do this, when he has nothing else to imploy his Thoughts on, or when he has other Particulars, beside these, that require his Care and Concern. Now the Man, who joins in a known familiar Form of Devotion, has nothing, as concerning his Prayer, to call off his Mind from God, and the Things for which he praises, or prays to him: for as to the Series and Words of Address, he is (if it be not his own fault) perfectly acquainted with them before he comes to the place of Worship: he hath not so great Occasion for the external Attention of the Ears, as he must needs have, who comes to join in a Prayer which he never heard before, or however never heard it perhaps in the same Method in which it is now to be deliver'd. He who prays by a stated Form, which Use

and

and Custom have ingraved upon his Mind, needs not, when he hears the Prayers rehearsed, to spend any Time in studying, or considering the Sense or Meaning of them, because he can inform himself in this point at leisure Times at home in his Closet, or in his Conversation, before he comes to the Place of Assembly; whereas on the other side he who joins in a Prayer unsight and unseen, must frequently have Occasion to turn his Thoughts from God, and those Things which are the Subject of his Devotion, to the finding out the Meaning of the Words and Phrases, and the Design and Intention of him who pronounces them. And I suppose it will not bear a Dispute, whether it be easier to attend to one or two particulars, or to attend to many at the same Time; nor by consequence, whether a Man who prays by an accustomed Form, may not more closely apply his Mind to God, and be more full of the Thoughts of those Graces which he comes to beg, or to return his Thanks for; than he who is obliged to take off his Mind from these two main points, in order to listen to the Words, and to get the true Signification and Import of them; which must often be the case of them, who affect to have a new Prayer every Time they assemble for the Worship of God. And the true cause of this Affectation seems

seems to be a natural Infirmary, I mean a Desire of Novelties; and these Novelties must consist principally in Words and Phrases: for I am unwilling to think that these Men do not always pray to God for all Things that are necessary, and proper for *Christians*, or that they do not always give Thanks for all Blessings both Spiritual and Temporal, which they have received at the hands of God: and if they do this, there can be very little variation in the Things that are the Subject of their Devotion, but principally, if not only, in the way of Expression: And it ought well to be consider'd whether they who pray in this manner are not by this means exposed to the Danger of having their Thoughts drawn off from what it chiefly concerns them to attend, by hearing of some new turns of Language, or Modes of Expression. Whatever is New or Old does always more or less surprize the Mind; and those who do in Prayer captivate the Minds of their Hearers by the Novelty, or Singularity of their Language, must at the same time carry them off from God, and the Things which they ought chiefly to regard. The great, and I may say the only Advantage the People reap by hearing Prayers which they never heard before, is, that their Mind is entertained with a fresh Variety of Words and Phrases; but then they pay

pay very dear for the Pleasure of their Fancies, if by this means their Attention to the main Business of Devotion, which consists in an Application of the Soul to God, be lost, or abated : and I am apt to think that whoever observes the Working of his own Mind, will perceive, that whatever strikes the Imagination does at the same time divert our Attention from the Objects, on which it ought chiefly to be employ'd. Nay, they who pray by a certain known Form have this great Advantage of those who join in such Prayers as they never heard before, that, if in any part of a Prayer, or Collect, their Attention has been interrupted ; yet they can recollect themselves, and by a short Reflection recover the Sum and Substance of the Prayer that hath been rehears'd, when they are perfectly well convers'd in it; and when they say *Amen*, can at the same time be sure what they ask of God, notwithstanding the former Absence of their Mind and Thoughts: Whereas the Man, who knows not what the Minister said last, if he don't attend to every Sentence, can never call back what he has lost for want of Attention, so as to join with the rest of the Congregation in offering it up to God.

2. Another Faculty of the Mind to be exerted in Prayer is *Understanding*. The

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closest Attention is vain, and perfectly lost, if they who are to join in publick Prayer, know not the Meaning of what is said: The most apt and elegant Prayer that ever was compos'd by Man, or the Spirit of God himself, cannot be a Spiritual Prayer to him, who knows not the Sense or Signification of the Words of it. If the Mass, and other Services of the Church of Rome, had been drawn by the Apostles themselves, or written by the Finger of God, as the Ten Commandments were, yet they could not be a Spiritual, or Reasonable Service to the generality of the People among whom they are used, so long as they are kept, and used in the Latin Tongue only. St. Paul's Argument against Praying in an unknown Tongue wholly turns upon this Supposition, that it is necessary that the whole Congregation should understand what is said: And it is certain an *English* Prayer may be so obscurely worded, that common People may be as far from taking the Sense and Meaning of it, as if it were *Greek*, or *Hebrew*: And it is altogether as absurd to pray in such a manner as that the Congregation does not apprehend the Sense and true Construction of it, as it is to pray in such a Language, as that the People know not the Signification of it.

single Words. And he that considers how many excellent Properties are necessary to qualify a Man to speak for half or three quarters of an Hour together, without Book or Notes, and especially without Premeditation, so as fully to be understood by a promiscuous Auditory, must be forced to confess it to be utterly in nature incredible, that all who among us presume to pray extempore in publick, should be capable of doing it: For this cannot be, unless it can be allow'd that they are all of them Men that abound in easy and proper Words which they have always at command, that they have a very clear, and distinct Pronunciation, that they have such a constant Presence, or rather an Assurance of Mind, as to be always sedate, so as that no accidental Impressions from without can discompose their Thoughts, or that tho' their Thoughts are disturb'd, yet their Speech, or Expression shall flow on clear and transparent: For any Failure in the particulars abovemention'd must cast a Cloud upon the Sense and Meaning of the Prayer, and render it in some Measure unintelligible to them that desire to join in it. Nay, further let it be granted, that every single Speaker in every *Dissenting* Congregation in *England* is absolutely infallible in his Extemporary Effusions, and exempt from all Trips, both as to his Con-

ception and Pronunciation; and from all inward Commotions that can disorder his Thoughts or Words; yet still I am of opinion, that it will scarce bear a doubt; but that a certain Form of Devotion, with which People have been long acquainted, which they carry in their Memories, or have before them in their Books, which they very often hear repeated, and the Sense whereof they can learn by their own Study at Leisure Hours, or by Information of others; may more perfectly be understood by Men of every Size and Capacity, than the best Performances of the most able Extempore Orators, even tho' they speak by the immediate Inspiration of the Holy Ghost, unless the Hearers were inspir'd as well as the Speakers.

3. A third most necessary Faculty of the Mind, and which ought above all others to be exercised in Relation to the Worship of God is, Judgment. As a good Judgment is the greatest Excellency that belongs to our Nature, as we are rational *Creatures*; so certainly it should chiefly be employ'd in that business, which is most Excellent and Important; and therefore it can never be allow'd, that he who prays Indjudiciously is a true Spiritual Worshipper: much less can that be called a Rational Service, or a Spiritual Worship, which perform'd in such a manner, as that the

is no Room left for the People to make a true Judgment of the Prayers that are used: and yet this is the case of the generality of the *Papists*: for it is impossible that they can use any Judgment in Relation to their Prayers, while they are lock'd up in an unknown Tongue. A blind Man may as well judge of Colours, as he who knows only his Mother-Tongue can judge of *Latin* Devotions. They who join in an Extempore Prayer conceived by another, if they make any Judgment at all, must be a very hasty one; they must hear, and understand, and offer it up, and make as good a Judgment of it as they can, but they must do it all at one Instant, while the Minister is pronouncing of it: or rather they must offer it up without any Reflection, or Consideration, without making any Distinction between proper and improper Petitions, or Expressions: for very few are so acute and ready in this Faculty of the Mind, as to be able to pass Judgment upon once hearing of a Prayer. *Dissenters* would have People believe, that the Clergy of the Church of *England* take too much upon themselves, and Aim at a Dominion over the Consciences of Men. But, I conceive, the whole Body of the Bishops, and Clergy of the Church of *England*, do not assume so great an Authority over the Consciences of the People, as ever

ry single Teacher, or Minister does, in reference to his Congregation : for he expects that all present should consent to a Prayer of his own making, to a Prayer, which if it be indeed pronounced Extempore, he cannot himself certainly say, whether it shall be Sense, or Non-sense, and that they should offer it up to God, whether the Contents be true or false, pertinent or impertinent, agreeable or unagreeable, to Scripture or Reason ; and in this Respect I dare be bold to say, they have now for many Years made an usurpation upon the Consciences of their Followers, for which there is no Precedent in Scripture, or Antiquity. On the other side it must in Justice be said, that the People who regulate their Devotions in Publick by known and stated Forms, they worship God in the most judicious manner ; for the Prayers which they use, were not only first composed with Judgment, and Deliberation, but have since been approved by the wisest Men in succeeding Generations, and even by the Representatives of the whole Nation in *Parliament*, before they were used in Publick ; and they who are to use them have the Privilege of Examining them before they offer them up to God, and the Sense and Wishes of their own Hearts.

We are often told that the Book of *Common-Prayer* is not enjoined in Scripture

now they, who make this Objection, ought to shew, that the Prayers they use are injoin'd in Scripture, and shew us in what Book, or Chapters, we shall find them. We own, and acknowledge, that the drawing of Publick Prayers is left to the discretion of Church Governours. And this we have to say for our Prayers, that they were made by those who were best qualified for such Business, and have been approved, and are so still, by such as are most proper Judges in these matters; whereas Extempore Prayers are things, of which few, if any, can give any Judgment at all. They are not known before they are pronounced: and as soon as they are pronounced, they cannot with any certainty be so recollected, as to make a perfect Judgment of them; except in Cases, where the Errors are very gross and palpable indeed: And I fear this is too often the Case.

4. Our Affections ought to exert themselves in our Prayers; I mean, the Soul in its Addresses to God ought to be inflam'd with an earnest Desire after those Graces for which we pray, and to be touch'd with a quick Sense of the Mercies for which we give thanks, and to be fill'd with a just concern for the Success of our Devotion, and especially to be possess'd with a very sincere Love, and Awe of that

God before whom we appear, with a happy mixture of Reverence and inward Joy, with such a fear and trembling as is necessary in all Duties, where our Salvation is nearly concerned, but without any Amazement, Discomposure, or Perturbation. This Disposition of our Affections is what we properly call Devotion ; and without it our Prayers are flat, and lifeless : and tho' it may not be possible for the best Men to have their Affections so much at their own disposal, as to be perfectly in all Respects regulated in the manner now mention'd ; yet he can never deserve the Name of a Spiritual Worshiper, whose Mind is not in a good Measure affected with an actual Consideration of the Favours which he begs of God, and for which he praises him, who is indifferent, or very little solicitous, whether his Prayers be accepted, or not ; and especially, if he do not feel his Heart possess'd with a Love, and fear of that God to whom he is making his Addresses. And let every Man judge for himself, whether he be not more capable of raising these Affections in his own Mind, and keeping them alive, while he is at Prayer, who beforehand knows every Word that is to be said, and has already in his own Judgment approved those Words, before he comes to offer them, and so has nothing now to do

do but apply his Mind to the putting up these Petitions with the most ardent Devotion ; or he, who must first attend to the Words spoken, and consider the Sense and Meaning of them, and examine whether they are proper and worthy to be spoken to an all-wise and infinite God, before he presumes to present them to him as the Sense of his own Soul. It is, I think, the common Sense of Mankind, that when the Thoughts are obliged to attend to many particulars at one time, they are by this means made less clear and vigorous : and it is, I suppose, altogether as evident, that when our Attention is engaged to several Things at once, our Affections cannot be so lively, nor move with so much freedom, as when the Mind is less earnestly imploy'd in other matters. They therefore who pray by a Form, with which they are well acquainted before-hand, having nothing to do but to lift up their Hearts to God, may certainly do it with more Affection, and Devotion, than the People who are to get the Words of their Prayer, and the Meaning of them, and to judge of their Fitness at the very Moment that they offer them to the Divine Majesty.

5. There is one singular Affection of the Mind, which is necessary to render our Prayers acceptable to God, and that is Humility. As we are both by the Old and

and New Testament taught, that we should make it our endeavour in the whole course of our Lives *to walk Humbly with our God*, and that we can never expect to be *lifted up*, or *exalted* upon any other Terms: so it is very evident, that this Virtue is more especially to be express'd, and practic'd in our Prayers. And *Christ* in the Parable of the Publican, hath inform'd us how effectual Humility is in procuring the acceptance of our Devotions. And as it is more peculiarly proper to be exercised in the Confession of our Sins, and intreating Pardon for them; so it is highly requisite, that whatever we are asking of God, or for whatever Mercies we are praising him, we should always be touch'd with a Sense of our Unworthiness of the least of those Mercies, and be under an habitual Conviction, that we are of ourselves too full of natural Pravity, and actual Transgressions, to appear before so pure, and just a God, or to intercede with him in behalf of ourselves, much less in behalf of others; a God before whom the Angels are not pure, and out of a just Sense of their own Defects, do cover their Faces in his Glorious Presence. And certainly the less the Mind is encumbered with the care of hearkning to, and getting a right Understanding, and making a just Judgment of the Words of the Prayer, the more it is at liberty to exert

exert this Affection of Humility, as well as the others mention'd under the foregoing Head. In Truth, there is just Cause to suspect, that the chusing to join with a Congregation, where sudden Praying is used, implies some degrees of an Affection directly contrary to that of Humility. For these People are apt to appropriate Spiritual Worship to themselves, and to their own Extempore way, and will scarce allow that any Book-Prayers can be acceptable to God, or however, they can by no means believe them so acceptable as the unpremeditated Conceptions of their own Teachers. And I will leave it to them to consider, whether this immoderate Opinion of their own new peculiar way of Worship, and their Contempt of ours, as mere Formality, be consistent with the Spirit of Humility; especially when all the Excellency of their Prayers, all the Advantage they can have of ours must proceed wholly from the Ability, or Fluency of Speech, in which they wou'd have it thought that their Preachers exceed the Clergy of the Church. Surely to lay so great a Stress upon the supposed Endowments of one Man that presides in the Worship of each of their Congregations, has a strong favour of *putting trust in Men*, and having *their Persons in Admiration*, and that in a point wherein they act without

out any Commission from God. For certainly, if there can be any Excess in confiding upon human Excellencies, or Abilities, they must be guilty of it, who believe the Success of their Devotion does at all depend upon the Eloquence of him who is the Mouth of the Assembly. And it is but too evident, that these People do put a greater value upon the Words, in which their Preachers conceive their Devotions, than upon those, which our Saviour himself hath taught them; for most, if not all of them, have banish'd the *Lord's Prayer* out of their Meeting-Houses; and so have not only forgotten the Admonition of the Prophet, who directs us to *take Words* with us, when we make our Addresses to God, but of our Blessed Saviour, who directs us when we pray to say *Our Father*, &c. And what greater Proof can be given of Mens want of Humility in their Devotion, than their setting aside a Form, that was drawn, and enjoined by the Son of God himself, and resting their Hopes of being heard upon the mere human, unstudied Effusions (for so they seem desirous to have them thought) of an Orator of like Passions with themselves? Certainly so far as the Words and Composition of any Prayer, can give it an advantage above others, that which was form'd by our Blessed Lord himself justly claims

claims a Precedence, not only before all human Prayers, but even before those of *David*, or other Holy Men, who spake and wrote by Inspiration. And a well informed *Christian* does never offer any Prayer with such Hopes and Assurance of being heard, as that which *Christ* himself composed for the perpetual Use of his People. For he truly judges, that he should be much wanting in the Honour due to his Lord and Master, and assume to himself an Authority over him, if he should presume to prefer, or equal any Devotions contrived by the Wisdom, or indeliberately put together by the Temerity of fallible Men, to the Divine Form that was first indited by him who had the Spirit above Measure.

6. Another Faculty of the Mind, which it becomes all Men to exercise in Relation to the Worship of God, is Memory. I mean, they ought to have their Prayers by Heart, or to bear them in their Thoughts so far at least, as that they may have an Influence on their Practice: for I know no better course that an honest *Christian* can take, in order to shame himself into the Practice of his Duty, than frequently to reflect with himself, how often he prays for some Virtues, and against some Vices, while yet he remains wilfully destitute of those Virtues, and goes on in the Practice
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of those Vices. Thus, for Instance; a *Church of England Man*, who frequently performs the publick Worship of God, according to the Book of *Common-Prayer*, may, if he often fall into Sin, be check'd and restrain'd, by considering, how contrary this is to the Petitions he puts up in the Church, *That he may, hereafter, live a godly, righteous, and sober Life, and that his Heart may be inclin'd to keep all God's Laws*; and that he may shew forth *God's Praise, not only with his Lips, but in his Life*: And this is a most excellent Use of Devotion; and by having such Petitions often in our Mouths, we inculcate them upon our Memories, and take the best Course to make them sink into our Hearts; and so, by Degrees, to render ourselves perfectly *Church of England Men*, as we shall be, when our Prayers and our Practice do truly agree together. But it can scarce be conceiv'd, that he who only hears a Prayer once and away, can have it so deeply register'd and engrav'd upon his Mind, as to answer this End of publick Devotion. He, indeed, who desires that his Prayers may never be a Reproach to his Life and Conversation, cannot take a more proper Method, than to have a fresh Prayer upon every Occasion; such a Prayer as may die in being born, and being heard but once, is in no great

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Danger of disquieting the Conscience of them that join in the Use of it, tho' they live in a direct, and constant Contradiction to it. But then he loses one great Benefit of his Devotions, which is, that his Prayers being treasur'd up in his Memory, may be a Restraint upon him in the Conduct of his Life.

If there were no other Use of having the common Prayers of the Church often repeated, and, by that Means, well fix'd in Mens Memories, yet this were one; that the most illiterate Person, by his constant Attendance upon the Worship of the Church, and so learning the Prayers by Heart, can never want a proper Form to address himself to God, upon almost every Occasion and Emergency, that can, in the common Course of the World, call for his Devotion. I am sensible, that some have impeach'd the Liturgy of our Church, as defective on this Account, but, I am perswaded, without just Cause; especially if they allow the Psalter to be a Part of our Liturgy, as, in common Justice, they ought. I think it plain, that the most plausible, and common Objection against the Sufficiency of the Liturgy, in this Respect, is, that we had no Prayer to be used in such a Case as that of the great Storm. But I must have Leave to say, that the Petition in the Litany, *From Lightning,*
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and Tempest ----- and from sudden Death, Good Lord deliver us, is as proper, reasonable, and, if duly offer'd, as effectual a Petition for this and such like Cases, as can, in Reason, be desired; and, in my Judgment, far beyond all those studied or unstudied Harangues, with which some Men affect to dress up their Devotions on such Occasions: And all judicious Men will subscribe to this, 'till it can be made to appear, that Multiplicity of Words is a Recommendation of a Prayer; or that Men have Cause to expect to be heard for their Loquacity, or *much speaking*, as our Translation expresses it, *Mat. vi. 7.*

I cannot, therefore, but be of Opinion, that the People who retain to such Congregations, where known stated Forms are publicly used, do take the best Course to worship God in a Spiritual Manner; and if they are constant in the Use of that publick Worship, they do thereby the better qualify themselves to perform their private Devotions in the most proper Method. If the Prayers used in religious Assemblies be not made and pronounc'd Extempore, but compos'd by the greatest Prudence, and Deliberation, yet, 'till the main Body of the People are perfectly well acquainted with them, and are tolerably ready at the Words, and the Meaning of them, they cannot offer them to God in
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so Spiritual a Manner, with such Degrees of Application, with such Clearness of Understanding, with so well satisfy'd a Judgment, with such Warmth of Affection, as they may, when they use long receiv'd, establish'd Forms, which they have by Custom and Habit render'd familiar to themselves; and especially, no Prayers, tho' they are Forms, can so influence our Practice, as they may which are riveted into our Memories by daily Inculcation. I am far from thinking, that Men are, in Conscience, oblig'd to confine themselves to the Prayers of our Liturgy, in their private Devotions; and yet I am of Opinion, the Generality of private Men will scarce any where find, or themselves be able to make better: And they who cannot read, or want Books of Devotion, may, by learning the Prayers of the Church, and the Psalms, as they may by often hearing of them, will rarely find any just Occasion to complain for want of proper Prayers for all Emergencies, and by their Want of others, are brought under a happy Necessity of using the best.

I have, hitherto, directed my Discourse to the People only, on this Head, and shew'd, That the Use of Forms, in publick Worship, is the most effectual Method to render their Prayers truly Spiritual. Now I shall, more particularly consider

the Case of the Teachers, or such as dictate Prayers to their Assemblies, of their own Extempore Conception: And I hope to make it appear, that they might render their Worship more Spiritual, in Relation to their own Persons, by the Help of Forms. I shall here use the same Method that I did before, while I was speaking of the People. And,

1. One would think it could not bear a Dispute, Whether a Man may not, with greater Freedom, lift up his Thoughts to God, and keep them fix'd on him, when he has the Matter and Words before him; or when he is obliged to study and pray, both at once: study, I mean, for Words and Phrases; and for placing every Word and Phrase in its proper Place, at the same Time that he is offering them to God. Our own Experience teaches us, that it is no easy Matter to preserve our Minds from Intervals of Forgetfulness of that great God, to whom we are speaking, and of the Graces and Favours, for which we are petitioning, and thanking him, tho' we have little else to mind. And we cannot but fear, that if we were obliged to be inditing our Prayers at the same Time we pronounc'd them, it would cause in us a perpetual Absence of Thought from that which we ought chiefly to regard; that is, the Presence of the divine Majesty

Majesty, and the Requests, and Praises, which we are offering to him. They may, indeed, tell us, that their Words flow into their Mouths without any Care, and Study of theirs; and that they are taught, at the same Time, by the holy Spirit, what they shall say. But, in this, they cannot, in Reason, expect to be believ'd; because God, as I have shew'd, never gave any such Promise to Men, in relation to Prayer. And if they did, indeed, themselves believe this, they would not train up, and instruct their young Students in the Exercise of Extempore Prayer, as I am assur'd, the most discreet, and sober of them do. For, certainly, the holy Spirit needs no human Documents, or Assistance. And God forbid, that all the Baulks, Hesitations, and Crudities, which the greatest Proficients, in this Way of praying, are liable to, should be imputed to the divine Spirit.

2. It would be very hard to suppose, that they who pronounce Prayers extempore, do not, for the most Part, understand their own Meaning, how dark soever their Expressions may seem to others: Yet, sudden Surprizes, odd Accidents, the sudden unexpected Presence of Men, who may cast an Awe upon them, cannot but, in some Measure, discompose, and ruffle their Thoughts; and whatever does this, this

must, in some Measure, cloud, and cause a Confusion in their Understandings and Conceptions. The greatest Thing that such Men commonly have to fear is, lest they should seem to be at a Stand, and to want Words: Yet it must, I suppose, be confess'd, that they who pray in this Manner, may, sometimes, be at a Loss in this Particular; and when this happens, there is too much Cause to suppose, that, in order to cover their own Defects, and that they may not seem perfectly silenc'd, they are driven to a Necessity of saying whatever comes next, rather than take to themselves the Shame of being wholly non-plus'd: And when any Thing of this Sort obstructs the Carreer of the Orator, it is to be fear'd, that he no more knows what he says, than the Priest, who is not well instructed in the *Latin* Tongue, knows the Meaning of the Prayers which he reads (if I may have Leave to call it Reading) out of the Mass-Book. And certainly, the most proper Way to prevent these Falsters of the Tongue and Thoughts, is to have sound Forms of Prayer lying before our Eyes, or to have them, at least, perfectly engrav'd on our Memories.

3. Judgment is the most valuable Endowment of our Minds, but there can be little Room for this in any Work that is done in Haste. If these Men do, indeed,

pray

pray without Premeditation, it can scarce be thought, that there is any proper Method, Coherence, or Connexion in their Conceptions; unless it can be suppos'd, that Words will, by meer Chance, range themselves into Order, and chuse a convenient Situation. I am perswaded, that they who do really pray extempore, for many Minutes together, if they were able perfectly to recollect their Words, and the Order in which they are spoken, would scarce approve their own Conceptions, if they could review them with a truly impartial Judgment.

4. That Affection which, in the Worship of God, ought to be employ'd upon God, and those divine Graces, and Favours, which are the Subject of Devotion, will be very much deaden'd by the Mind's hunting after new Thoughts, and Expressions; and the more Earnestness the Orator uses in dressing up his Prayers with such Variety of melting Words and Sentences, as he knows will best be relish'd by his Auditors, must lessen that Devotion of Mind, which is one of the greatest Excellencies of Spiritual Prayer.

5. Humility is that Affection, which, of all others, is more peculiarly requir'd in the Worship of God; and, certainly, it is no good Symptom of Humility to address the great God of the World, the King

of Kings, and Lord of Lords, with such Words as come next to Hand, and to offer to him such Thoughts and Expressions as float uppermost in our own Fancies. It is true, *God spake to Moses Face to Face, and as a Man spaketh with his Friend*, Ex. xxxiii. 11. but he never encouraged *Moses* to use the same Familiarity with Him, but rather taught him to keep his Distance, by *punishing, or severely treating him, when he spake unadvisedly with his Lips*, Ps. cvi. 32, 33, and in being angry with him for using too much Freedom of this Sort, Ex. iv. 13, 14. There is no Doubt, but God graciously accepts the Sighings of a contrite Heart, the inarticulate Devotions of an humble Petitioner, and hearkens to the sincere Prayers of a pious Soul, tho' dress'd in homely, and imperfect Language, if he have no better to offer to Him: But for a Man to lay aside well compos'd Forms, and even despise them, and to prefer his own sudden, and, as it may happen, his coarse and rude Conceptions, to the best well-digested Forms of the most able Men; this does not favour of Humility.

I hope it will not seem uncharitable to suppose, that some, at least, especially of the young Beginners in the Extemporary Way, may be touch'd with no small Desire of recommending themselves to their Audi-

tors,

tors, and gaining a Reputation among them, by their Fluency, and Patheticalness in praying: And whether any Degrees of Vain-glory, and Affectation of the Praise of Men, be not a very disagreeable Mixture, when join'd with divine Worship, no Man need be told. And certainly, that Method of paying our publick Honours to God, which naturally leads Men into such a Temptation of gaining the Applauses of Men, and, to that End, into making an Ostentation of a Man's Parts and Rhetorick, is not the most desirable; especially, because the Desire of human Praise is so prevailing a Passion, that the Man, who is possess'd with it, is in great Danger of having all his good Affections, and devout Tendencies, choak'd and kill'd by the Poison of it. The Truth is, Vain-glory is one of the most fatal Diseases, to which the Ministers of *Christ Jesus* are liable, and, therefore, any discreet Man, who assumes to himself that glorious Character, would rather expose himself to the utmost Contempt and Reproach, from ignorant, unthinking Men: He had rather be call'd a reading Priest, a meer Formalist, an ungifted Man, than to run the Hazard of forfeiting his inward Devotion, and cooling his Affection towards God, and divine Things, especially in the publick Worship, in order to raise

himself a Name, and become Popular, by being the *Servant of Men*. I own, that Vain-Glory is a Passion that ought not to be indulg'd in Sermons, and that Ministers may be tempted, and prevail'd upon to aim at it in Preaching, as well as in Praying: But certainly, of the Two, it is much more intolerable in the latter; for in Preaching we speak to Men only, and this, therefore, is by no Means so solemn and sublime a Business, as Prayer, by which we speak to God; and, therefore ought to have Hearts, and Desires, rais'd towards Him alone, and not to be courting the Favour of Men, while we are engag'd in the immediate Service of our Maker.

I shall leave it to the Consciences of those who assume to themselves this Privilege of dictating Prayers to their several Congregations, to consider, whether their real, or suppos'd Abilities in this Particular, does not often prove a Snare to them, by the great Reputation it gives them among those of their own Way; and if this does not too often elevate their Minds, and dispose them to be too well pleas'd with themselves; and especially if they are so opinionated of their own Performances, as to believe, that their Prayers are, indeed, the Dictates of the Holy Spirit: And I shall leave it to them further to consider, whether it were not more adviseable to follow

follow the more perfect Way of Peace and Charity, by conforming to establish'd Devotions, and, by this Means, to guard themselves against the Temptations of which I have been speaking, and which I have just Reason to think, have prov'd fatal to several Men, who to indulge themselves in the Affectation, and Exercise of their Gifts, if they were really as spiritual and divine, as some are willing to have them thought. If, indeed, any great or excellent End of Religion were to be serv'd by this Way of Praying, which might not so well be attain'd by a stated Liturgy; if this Gift of Praying Extempore were miraculous, and sufficient to convince *Infidels* of the Truth of *Christianity*; if it were in its own Nature adapted to raise, and increase true Devotion, or to render our Worship more acceptable in the Sight of God, no rational Man would oppose, or omit the Use of it. But, I conceive, it will be very hard to prove, that any good Effects can be produc'd by it, and that it has not been attended with very many ill ones.

6. As to the practical Memory of our Prayers, which may render them influential on our Lives, it would be very strange, if they who conceive, and utter them, should not remember more of them than they who have only had the Hearing of them;

them; and yet they must confess, that Prayers Daily, or Weekly repeated, are more like to dwell in the Memory of him that pronounces them, than Prayers that were never thought of till they were spoken, and that are never to be serv'd up again, at least not in the same order.

Yet, to speak my Mind freely, I am willing to suppose, that these Orators may remember their Prayers better than they would have it thought by the People. If indeed their Conceptions were unstudied, as I gave for granted in what I before said, then I apprehend they could not long be retain'd in the most tenacious Memory; but I am disposed to believe, that the most discreet of them do before-hand set, and compose in their own Minds the several Parts, and the Method, if not the precise Words of their Prayers, and do in truth pray by a Form, as well as we, tho' they are asham'd to own it, and we glory in it; as indeed we have great Reason to do, since from what I have said it is, I conceive, sufficiently clear, that one very proper means to Worship God in Spirit, is to do it by known, and stated Forms.

And it deserves our particular Notice, that most, if not all, that has been said whereby to prove, that the Minister may pray more Spiritually by a Form, than without one, may very well be applied

to private Men, who pray in their own Closets. I would not be understood of short Ejaculations, which devout Men may upon any particular Occasion send up to God, but of set and solemn Prayer in Private. It is I conceive, very evident that he who prays by himself alone may perform his Devotions with greater Application, with a clearer Sense, and Apprehension, and with more Judgment and Affection, than he, who while he is at Prayers, has his Mind always upon the Stretch for finding out proper Words and Phrases in which to express himself, and therefore cannot have his Thoughts so fully bent on the main Business of all, which is to keep his Mind so fix'd upon God, and the Things on which his Devotion ought chiefly to be imploy'd. It is true, when a Man prays in Secret, whatever way he uses, he cannot be affected with those Temptations, which arise from the presence of others; but there is another Danger to which he is as much expos'd as if he were in the most publick Assembly, and that is, lest he should be exalted in his own Imagination, and value himself above others who pray by Book or Form; and tho' the Fear of this ill Consequence should not hold us back from the doing of any Thing that is our Duty; yet, I apprehend, it ought in prudence to restrain us
from

from any thing that is not our Duty. And I can never be able to discern any one point in Religion to be clear from Scripture or Reason, if this be not, *viz.* that we are no where in Scripture required, nor have any one Argument to prove, that it is our Duty to pray Extempore, or without Book. And I know it is commonly said it is most edifying to pray without a Form, but I am persuaded, that they who say this, means nothing but that they are better pleas'd with this way of praying than with the other. If they mean, that they are by this means instructed in any valuable Truth, which may not, or is not to be learnt from a Form, let them tell us what those Truths and Doctrines are, and it will certainly appear, that they may be found in a Common-Prayer-Book as plainly as in any of their Extempore or even Studied Performances. If by being edified they mean, that they are better and more firmly built up in the *Christian* Faith, let them shew us that Article, which the Liturgy does not teach us; and why we may not be brought to as sincere a Belief, and as full a Sense of it, as if we attended their unpremeditated, or premeditated Devotions. If by being edified they mean, united together in the Belief and Practice of *Christianity*, which is the only true

true, and perfect Edification; let them shew me any one particular, that has been a more effectual Engine to make, and widen the Breaches of the Church, and of the whole Body of *Christians* on this side of the World, than this of Praying without a Form: so that, in a Word, I can apprehend no Meaning in their being edified, but that their Fancies are soothed with the Variety, Novelty, and Peculiarity of Expression, which are the only Advantage (if I may so call it) of this way of Worship, and which, as I have shew'd before, render it less Spiritual, less Agreeable to the true Ends of Devotion. And certainly in so great and solemn a Business as that of the Worship of God, we should consult the two great Oracles of Scripture, and Reason, rather than our own Fancies; and not so much consider what is pleasing to ourselves, as what is pleasing to God.

Some may suspect, that by justifying, and extolling our own Way of Worshipping God by a Form, we only provide for our own ease, make the best Excuse we can for our Sloth, or Insufficiency: for they may imagine, that no Ministers would choose to read Prayers out of a Book, but such as are too Ignorant, or Idle, to make Prayers of their own. But,

I. As to Ignorance, it is evident that this can be no hindrance to praying with-

out

out Book. If some of our Clergy were as Ignorant as they who make the Objection would have them thought, yet sure we may dare say, that there are many who pray in publick Assemblies of Dissenters, and that without Premeditation, if we may believe them, who yet do not exceed the very meanest of our Clergy in Knowledge, or Learning: And I am really of Opinion, that one of the best Qualifications for an extempore Address to God, is such a degree of Ignorance as makes Men unsensible of their own Slips, and Solecisms, and incapable of discerning the Incoherence and Inconsistency of their hasty Productions: for this secures them from all that Shame and Confusion, with which Men of a middling Sense, and a quick Apprehension, are seized upon such Occasions. A Man of true Knowledge and tolerable Judgment, tho' he think himself well enough qualified to speak for half an Hour, without Book or Notes, to Men, yet will be more upon his guard, and see reason for much greater Caution, when he is to make his Addresses to God: for the Words of Solomon carry a great deal of Reason, as well as Authority in them: *Be not Rash with thy Mouth, and let not thine Heart be hasty to utter any thing before God; for God is in Heaven, and thee upon Earth.* Eccl. v. 2.

2. As to Idleness, tho' I think it a very ill Property in any, but especially in those, who should be Examples to others; yet I cannot but think, that they had better be Idle than employ'd in doing what is contrary to their Duty, as the use of Variety, and always new Prayers certainly is; because, as has been abundantly shew'd, it is a great Obstruction to Spiritual Worship: And all who do at all understand the Pastoral Office, and the present Circumstances of Religion, cannot but be sensible, that if Clergy-men had much more leisure, than they generally have, they may easily find much more useful, and proper Business, than that of perpetually composing Prayers without any just Occasion; when yet the Prayers so composed are certainly Forms, not only to the People, who join in them, but to those who made, and pronounce them.

And they who impute the Use of Forms of Prayer to the Idleness of our Clergy, must be such as do not believe, that it is necessary that Prayer should be conceived, and utter'd Extempore, or that to pray in this manner is a Gift of the Holy Spirit; for, if it be necessary that Prayers should be conceived, and utter'd Extempore, by an extraordinary and supernatural Influence of the Spirit, then the less Study and Thought is spent upon them, the

the better they must be; to pray **Extempore**, and to premeditate, or labour in making Prayer, are inconsistent Things. And if the ability of Praying in this manner be an extraordinary Gift of the Holy Spirit, then it is not to be obtained by Study or Industry; so that in Sum, there is no Difference as to this point between Praying by Form, or Praying without one. He that prays without a Form drawn by himself, or by any other, must have his Prayer from the natural Fluency of his own Genius, or from the Suggestion of the Holy Spirit; and both these Suppositions exclude all Labour and Study; and therefore he that takes this Method of Praying is altogether as much expos'd to the Objection of being Idle, or taking no pains, as he that reads his Prayers out of a Book; unless the Vehemence of his Voice and Gestures, in delivering his Prayers, may free him from this Imputation. But I am persuaded, that all wise Men will think that no Pains can be better spared, than those which a Minister takes in the violent Efforts of his Voice, and Agitations of his Body, in Prayer, which must needs discompose his own Mind, and dissipate his Thoughts, and Devotion, and the Peoples too.

V. I am now come to the last general Head of Discourse, which is the Excellency

ency of Spiritual Worship, that is, as has been shew'd, such a Worship, wherein the Mind applies it-self to God, and to what is said or done, with a Clearness of Understanding, sound Judgment, warm Affections, and especially a profound Humility, and so as to leave lasting Impressions on the Memory: and thus to pray is most excellent.

1. Because this is serving God with the best part of us, that is, our Souls, which nobly distinguish us from all senseless Creatures, and from the Beasts that perish, and which have certainly no Apprehensions of God, or his Worship (whatever degrees of Sense in other Points Men may ascribe to them). And when we Worship God with our Spirits then alone we Worship him like sincere Men, and good *Christians*. Hypocrites may do all the rest: the grossest *Pharisees* might comply with all the Forms and Rites of *Moses's* Law; he might go twice or thrice a Year in Pilgrimage to *Jerusalem*, he might be at great Expence in offering Sacrifice, and very nice, and exact in all the Ceremonies of Offering them; the Outside *Christian* may observe all the Decencies of Worship, he may bend his Knee, and even prostrate his Body, he may be very sedulous in lifting up his Hands and Eyes, in pronouncing, or joining in a Prayer, either

in Book, or without Book ; he may strain his Voice, and even tear his Lungs with his obstreperous Clamours ; but still if he draw near to God with his Lips, or outward Man only, while his Heart is far from him, he is not a Spiritual Worshipper, he does not serve God with his Mind, but with his Body only. By performing the outward Part we may gain the Credit of being Devout among Men, and if we do it without a Book, we may get the Reputation of being Gifted, and be perhaps so vain as to think so ourselves ; but none serve God in Spirit, but they whose Thoughts and Affections accompany their Words and Actions in Divine Worship.

2. The Excellency of Spiritual Worship appears from this, *viz.* that it is most agreeable to the Divine Nature to be served in this manner. Our Souls are not only the most noble Parts of us in themselves consider'd, and as they set us above all other Creatures in this visible World, but because they are the Resemblances of God, they are his Likeness, and he is justly stiled by the Apocryphal Writer, a *Lover of Souls* : He has not only a compassion for them, as being *the Father of the Spirits of all Flesh* ; but he has a delight in them, when they exert the best Powers that he hath given them in his Service, when he sees them raising them-

selves

felves up toward him on the Wings of Holy Love and Devotion, and when he observes in them an humble Awe and just Reverence of his Divine Majesty. He will always have a special Eye, and Regard to a *contrite, humble Spirit, that trembles at his Word*, and that humbles itself in the Approaches which it makes to the Throne of Grace. Our Souls are in a peculiar manner from God, he gives, or infuses them into us, by a singular Act of his divine Power, and when they are employ'd in paying their just Acknowledgments, and owning their Dependence on him as their Father, and Sovereign, then they do best answer the End of their Creation, and are exercised in their proper Office. In a word, God is a Spirit, and when we worship him with our Spirits, we do it as becomes rational Creatures, as befits his Nature and ours both at once, and pay our Services to him, as it were in Kind.

3. This is that Worship which alone can render us acceptable to God, for so our Blessed Saviour has pronounced, *the Father seeketh such to worship him*. It is certain whatever Terms they are, upon which God is pleased to declare his Willingness to receive our Petitions, we are absolutely bound to comply with them, if we expect to be Successful; and we are doubly

to blame, if we do not comply in this Respect, because the Terms are not only such as God proposes, but because they are most reasonable in themselves: For tho' Spiritual Worship be in itself most valuable, and agreeable to the Nature of that God, to whom it is paid; yet it is what all Men how poor soever they are in worldly Estates, how defective soever they are in Body, are capable of rendring to God, so long as we are ourselves, that is, have competent Understanding, Judgment, and Memory, and are capable of exerting our Affections of Holy Love, and Awe of the Divine Majesty, and of self-abasement, we are sufficiently qualified to pay that Service to God, which he principally, and absolutely requires. They that do indeed serve God with their Hearts, will serve him with their Estates and Bodies too, if they are in a condition. But surely it should be a most solid Comfort to every pious Man to consider, that whatever his outward Wants, or his bodily Defects may be, yet that so long as he has composed Thoughts, or a right Mind, he may be sure of having the Favour of God, if he make Use of his best Thoughts and Affections in his Worship and Service. (For sure few will be so very hard as to believe that such a Man shall be rejected, tho' he knew not to pray otherwise

wise

wife than by some common Form.) He, who has nothing else to offer to God, but the pious Desires of a sincere Heart, brings a richer Sacrifice to God, than he that should, with the most solemn Rites and Decorums, present to him all the Gold of the Indies, and the Cattle upon a Thousand Hills; or that addresses him in the most elegant Words that ever were composed by the Wit of Man, or by the Spirit of God. Only let him take care that his Mind be purified from Vice, and wilful Sin; and then, tho' he have not a Mire to offer, a Tongue to speak, a Knee to bend, an Hand, or Eye to lift up to God, yet he may depend on God's Grace, or good Will to him. Especially if he does it in Truth too, that is according to that most perfect Manner which our Saviour hath revealed, in the Prayers and Praises of the *Christian Church*, without the Blood and Smoke of the Law; and if he make his approaches to God thro' the only Mediator, thro' whom alone we have access to the Father.

And I will with all my Heart, that all *Christians* were agreed in all other points of Religion, and especially of Divine Worship, as well as they are in this, that the Dispositions of the Mind are chiefly to be regarded in the Services which we pay to God; and till they are,

that they would make 'it their principal Care, whether they Worship by a Form, or without one, to make their Approaches to God with such Purity of Mind, such a Sense of God's Goodness, and other Attributes, and of their Dependance on him, such a sincere Love for Truth, and Peace, as may make some amends for the Defects and Imperfection of their Prayers and Praises.

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